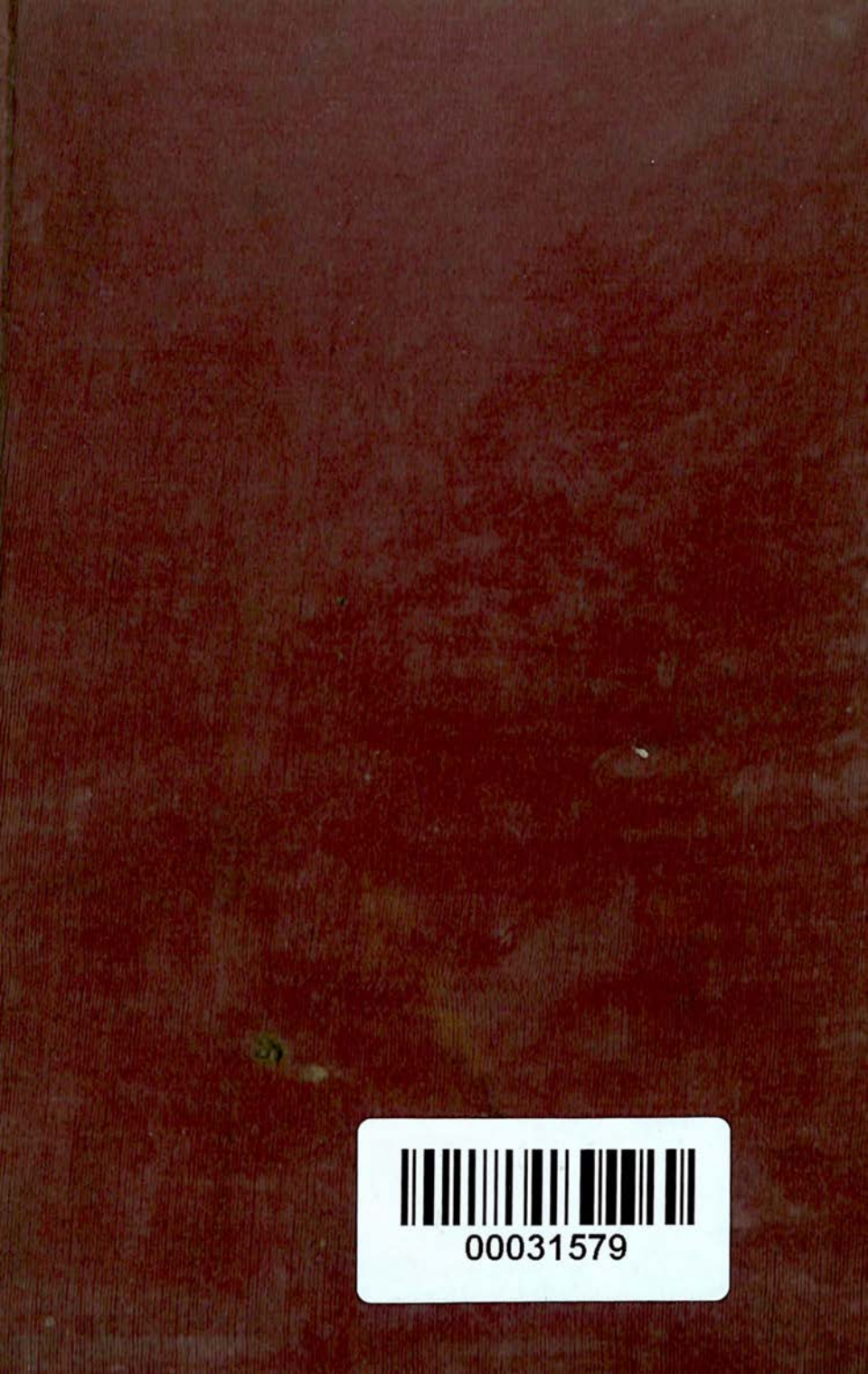
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CONCERNING

JOHN'S INDIAN AFFAIRS

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BY

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INTRODUCTORY REMARKS.

WITH the exception of the last, all these essays have lately appeared in *Fraser's Magazine*, and they appear here by the kind permission of the publishers. Most of them were written with the view of keeping steadily before the attention of the public the very serious nature of our financial and general position in India, and they are now reprinted partly with the same object, but mainly with the view of pointing out those remedies the rough outline of which I have ventured to suggest in the final essay. That some remedies that will effect a large reduction of expenditure are absolutely necessary is now universally admitted, and for the simple reason that, just as no one depends upon the permanence * of the

* "The position attained by foreign nations in China could only be," in the words of Sir R. Alcock, "created by force, naked physical force;" and his declaration that, "to maintain or improve that position we must still look to force in some form, latent or expressed, for the result," is entitled to the gravest consideration. This is, indeed, plain

opium revenue (about one-sixth of the total sum raised), so has no one been able to tell how our Indian Empire, as it at present stands, can exist without it. And yet, in the face of this very dangerous financial position, the Government has declared its intention of adding at least another one hundred millions to the two hundred millions of liabilities already incurred by the Indian Government. And this sum is to be spent on railways, notwithstanding that those already made not only do not pay, but are a heavy and a steadily increasing burden on the resources of our Indian Empire. It is impossible, I venture to say, to repeat these statements too often, or at least till the English people resolve to put their Indian affairs on a sound financial footing, and I there-

speaking; and it is no wonder that the lords of trade attached "the greatest possible significance" to the fact thus bluntly communicated to them; "for if," they say, "the principle of creating new openings for trade by force has been definitively renounced by her Majesty's Government, it follows that, unless some other basis can be found on which to rest our future relations with China, our trade with that empire, and the great interests involved in it, must be precarious and insecure."—*Quarterly Review*, April, 1872. P. 390. So at present it seems that we simply say to the Chinese, "Take our opium or we will cut your throats, as we have done before." But unless we are prepared to cut their throats because they will not desist from growing the plant in China, I am afraid that even force will not serve us much longer, as there is much arable waste land in some provinces of that country, and the people have already produced the drug of a quality closely resembling our best Indian produce.

fore make no apology for again and again returning to the subject.

But if we turn from the gloomy financial prospects to a consideration of the general state of popular feeling, we shall have still more reason to wonder at the vigour with which Indian officials are increasing the stake of the English in such distant and precarious fields. "That," to use the words of that experienced statesman, Sir Donald Macleod, "there is a vast amount of discontent spreading from year to year, owing to the unsympathizing character of our administration, and the absence of all really effective endeavours to ascertain the feeling and wants of the native community, or to give them a voice in the regulation of their affairs, none can possibly doubt who knows anything of the people, or who is in the habit of going amongst them." And here I do not think I could do a greater service to both India and England, than by calling attention to a truly admirable pamphlet,* written by a native of India. There the reader will find in sixty small pages more remarks of real value as regards our Indian rule than in any book on India I have ever heard of. The over-taxation and change of taxation, the over-

* *The Reform Question.* By Mahadeva Moreshvara Kunte. Bombay, 1871.

legislation, the unjust extortions, the want of any kind of representation, all are admirably brought out, the general conclusion arrived at being that "being ignored, the native is sullen and full of resentment." The following, however, will perhaps give a still better idea of native feeling:—"But England," says the writer, "seeks to force its own habits and notions on nations which Providence has entrusted to its care. Its general attitude towards the natives hurts their social feelings and prejudices; its general administration, their political feelings; and those itinerant missionaries, who know nothing beyond abusing their gods, their religious feelings." And it is in the middle of these gloomy financial and general prospects that the Government has thought fit to encourage the disaffected by publicly disgracing two officers (Messrs. Cowan and Forsyth), who may possibly have met the outbreak of the Kookas with measures more severe than the occasion required, but who ought never, looking at the matter from a purely political point of view, to have been publicly punished for what, assuming that they were wrong, was merely one of those errors of judgment which, considering our peculiar position in India, we must expect to be occasionally made by even the best and most conscientious officers of Government. The purposes of Government would have been com-

pletely effected by an expression of censure, and if any further lesson was needed, it might have been given, in a manner neither galling to the service nor injurious to our general interests, by, after some period of delay, quietly removing the officers in question to some employment where they would be unlikely to be thrown into a critical situation.

Truly indeed may it be said that, as matters at present stand, the position of an officer in an Indian crisis will be the most disagreeable in the world; and it is hardly necessary to add that the immediate result will be that in future any man who cares for his family or prospects will simply write for orders instead of acting with vigour, while the general result will be to make the service more unpopular than ever. But every effort seems now to be made to disgust the officers of Government, and so to add to the general difficulties of the situation; and as these pages are passing through the press, I find that an attempt has been made to blacken the character of an entire branch of the public service, and that the Bombay Government has recently published a minute of the most galling description regarding a practice which has existed for years in the commissariat department, and by which, however irregular the practice may have been, it is not pre-

tended that the Government has lost a shilling. "The successive officers," it is stated, "have habitually rendered false cash accounts, they have signed false certificates of having no cash balance in hand, whilst they had large balances." His Excellency in counsel, however, kindly adds that he "attributes no fraudulent motives to the officers," and then we have more about the "falsity of the accounts and statements to which they put their names." Then we have the names of "the living officers who have been guilty," and I suppose in a future minute we shall have the names of those who are dead. And what, it will naturally be asked, is all this for? Well, it appears that it had been the practice of the department for years to keep a suspense account, to prevent the trouble of sums already appropriated being paid into the Treasury one day and drawn out the next; and this separate account seems certainly to have been continued against Government orders, but that it must have been generally winked at is evidenced by the fact that it had existed for at least eight years. The mention of this matter may certainly seem a little out of place here, but, as I have said before, things like these add to those general difficulties, all of which must be taken into account if we wish to form a complete idea of the situation.

One word more. In every quarter are the drums being hoisted, and it is a hopeful sign that we do not find that those who point to the probable storm are accused, as they often have been in former times, of provoking and justifying an outbreak. But nearly every one sees the signs of the times except the Government. They are equally apparent from the tone of feelings evinced by the humblest classes up to the pamphlet of the advanced Hindoo. That tone plainly says, "Go on, or be shoved on." All sensible men must prefer to go on, and to give in advance those reforms which, sooner or later, will be extorted from us.

In conclusion I have much pleasure in acknowledging my great obligations to Mr. James Geddes, of the Bengal Civil Service, the author of "The Logic of Indian Deficit," a valuable pamphlet which I have quoted freely in my second essay. I have also much pleasure in acknowledging my obligations to Dr. Geekie, from whose interesting little book, "Indian Missions," I have taken most of the missionary facts that refer to the rapid extinction of inferior races, and prove the uselessness (if any proof, indeed, is needed for what has been so long apparent) of carrying our religion to them, instead of devoting our energies exclusively to the more permanent types of mankind.

There are, of course, many others to whom I am under obligations, and amongst them I may mention the lamented Professor Goldstücker, Mr. William Tayler, and Mr. Maclean, the well-known editor of the *Bombay Gazette*.

CONCERNING JOHN'S INDIAN AFFAIRS.

I.

MY DEAR JOHN,—The other day, as I have no doubt you have not in the least forgotten, I had a long talk with you on the state of your Indian affairs, and as I did not quite convince you that your Indian estates are really in such a very unsound condition, I think it just as well to remind you of the main points of our conversation, to the end that you may comprehend matters with exceeding clearness, and thereby be aroused to a full sense of your danger.

If you will only reflect for one moment, my dear John, you will remember that I opened the conversation by remarking on your extreme generosity in implicitly believing the statements of your Indian agents as regards the prosperity and general material prospects of your Indian property. Here, I may remind you, you became indignant, and my soul entirely sank within me when you said, with

considerable emphasis of tone and manner: "My good man, I dare say you mean honestly, but I have always been suspicious of those who mistrust others; and if I can trust my agents for my affairs at home, why shouldn't I trust those who manage my Indian estates? Do you suppose that Duff, and the other man, who tells him what to say, would think of imposing on me? Why, it was only the other day that Duff told me that, though there would be a little difficulty in making both ends meet, fortune had conspicuously favoured the agency of late, and that instead of the people dying as they used to by the million, and so preventing me from getting in as much revenue as usual, and selling as many cotton prints as I otherwise might have done, things had been going on so well that nothing in the way of famine had occurred for the last two years. Then, there is a certain intoxicating drug that Duff told me had gone up in price, and which he found much comfort in. You know they sell it to the Chinese. I must admit that I have never been quite easy in my mind about that drug. Some people say that the Chinese governors would much rather not admit it into their dominions at all, while others say that the Chinese are taking to growing the drug themselves, and will some day be able to intoxicate themselves quite comfortably without any assistance from me; and those who

say all this, also say that I am a great fool to depend upon the drug at all for keeping my estates afloat, and that I should look upon it merely as a temporary source of income which may be cut off any day, instead of putting myself into such a position that I depend upon the drug in question for eight millions out of the fifty I am obliged to screw out of my Indian property in order to make both ends meet. But Duff and my other agents would have been sure to have mentioned all this to me if there had been anything really alarming, so I conclude that the thing must be all right. Then you know Duff has sent out more cotton gardeners, and is spending a great deal of money in looking up that most important article, so that I sha'n't mind in future if America does go smash, as I shall soon be able to get all the cotton quite comfortably from my Indian estates. He is a knowing fellow, that Duff, I can tell you, and he means to spend a good deal in silk production, so that I may have something to fall back on from my Indian estates, if I can't get enough silk elsewhere. Then he says he is going to try and get my Cheshire salt into use amongst the people on my Indian property. Altogether I am highly pleased with Duff, for, as far as I can see, he seems determined to get everything possible out of, and everything possible (of my own making)

into my Indian estates. So how, after all this, you have the face to tell me that my Indian affairs are not going on all right I can't conceive! Why, I've lent my Indian agents more than one hundred and eighty millions on the security of the concern (which you know I keep financially separate from my home property), and I mean to lend them another hundred millions to get on with the railways. Where should we have been in this country without railways?" Here, my dear John, you took breath and wiped your forehead, and I dare say you will recollect how attentively and respectfully I listened to all this without saying one word. But sooner or later I know that the pause must come, and that "the world is his who has patience." Reflecting on all this, I bided my time, and, when you had quite done, proceeded to instil into your mind a few facts and arguments regarding your Indian affairs—arguments, my dear John, you are sure to perceive the force of when you peruse them at your leisure, and far away from the regions of personal dispute.

How you fretted and fumed, my dear John! But, as facts and figures were duly marshalled before you, and you began to be nervous, or at least doubtful, as to the safety of your Indian estates, you again took refuge in anger, and wanted to know what on earth I had to do with your Indian

interests. This, you know, John, was not very logical; but the turn was a fortunate one for me, for it gave me an opportunity of observing that, on the faith of the estate being in good order, I had not only invested my own money on it, but, as a trustee for others, had recommended that money should be lent on the security of the concern: and besides all that, I pointed out that many others, relying implicitly on the statements set forward by your agents as to the soundness of the property, had invested thereon funds provided for widows and orphans, for the halt, the lame, and the blind; and that both for myself and for my countrymen I had a perfect right to be listened to. Here, my dear John, I felt that I had immediately gained ground, for when you thought of the widow and orphan, and the poor in general, your kindly heart beat fast, and you turned upon me that benignant eye for which you are so well and widely known. Your eye, too, looked troubled; and withal some honest indignation rose in your bosom, which showed me that if your Indian agents had been at all near, they might have felt your wrath; but the feeling which rose above all (for with all your looking out for the main chance, there's a great deal of good about you, John) was the feeling that, in consequence of your having been deceived as to the value of your Indian property, you had

perhaps been the means of taking people in and getting them to advance money on false pretences. But you wisely repressed your feelings for the present, and inwardly resolved to make a searching enquiry into the real position and prospects of your Indian estates; and with this view you told me that you were going to get together a number of the managers of your English property and form them into a regular committee of enquiry on Indian finance, in order that things might be reinstated on a firm and intelligible basis. This resolution I, of course, applauded loudly, and for it I expressed my grateful thanks; but, at the same time, I asked leave just to talk a little on the state of things as at present existing, and especially with reference to the causes of their having been got into such a mess. What I had previously said about the orphans and widows had evidently thrown you into a softened and seriously amiable mood, and you were kind enough to say that you had been rather hasty with me at first; but that as you now had half an hour to spare, you would be glad to hear what I had to say on the subject. This was just what I wanted; so, drawing a long and circumspect breath, I commenced the following representation of Indian affairs:—

Just as I was going to commence my statement, I may remind you that, with some apology, you

begged to interrupt me for one moment merely to point out that you hated figures. Here, my dear John, I was delighted to find that nothing bored you so much, as all my life long figures had been my especial stumbling-block; and, indeed, at the very sight of them I have often been seized with sudden illness. I accordingly assured you that you need not be at all afraid, and that I should be able to show you how matters stood by a series of general statements, involving only a few figures here and there, which you could easily get one of your numerous agents to verify or contradict, as the case might be. Here, if I recollect right, you muttered that you had once or twice tried to make out your Indian accounts, but never could succeed, as the blockheads were sometimes a million or two out, and were constantly getting into some prodigious bungle.

Taking a long breath, I then, my dear John, started fairly on my way to give you an account of your Indian affairs, while you settled yourself into an attitude which I looked upon with some uneasiness, as it is one so commonly assumed by some of your home agents when the term "Indian finance" is uttered at all near them. However, I made a determined start, and you gave a very incredulous shrug when I commenced by telling you that you were practically carrying over the soil of your

Indian estates and using it as a sort of top dressing for your home fields; and that, though your home fields were being much enriched by this process, your Indian property, instead of getting richer, was, comparatively speaking, standing still, while you yourself required larger profits from it every day in order to make it pay its way without borrowing more money. Here you cut me short, and said that the idea was all stuff. "Why, my good man," you continued, "I once had the same idea myself, and it certainly gave me a good deal of uneasiness, as I always had a notion that these outlying estates, being steadily drained by absenteeism, must go down in the long-run. But I found the thing all nonsense after all, and my home agents, whom I told to enquire into the matter, soon sent me a beautiful paper made out by my Indian agents at Westminster, and which showed me how extremely prosperous things really were. This paper was signed by a man called Melvil, and you can see for yourself that things are all right. They looked bad at first because the soil was really carried off in produce of one sort and another, and the people seemed to be taking or getting nothing in return; but you see that Melvil says it's all right, and that 'the great excess of exports over imports is regularly liquidated in silver.' Melvil told me this about thirteen years ago, and it seemed so

plain that the estate must be thriving in consequence of its getting an equivalent for the soil it had parted with, that I at once wrote out to my Indian agents to go ahead and lay out as much money as they liked, as you know that when wealth accumulates in a country, you can always afford to do things in a really handsome style. My agents were greatly pleased at this order, and set to work with much zeal, and you can see by the accounts they have sent me that many of my subjects who used to get their feet wet in wading across rivers up to their knees now get over quite comfortably on the iron bridges sent out from home; and then, instead of shoving their carts through the sand of the river beds, thereby entailing a serious loss of valuable time, they can now drive across the bridges without a moment's delay on the payment of a trifling toll. Then my Indian agents built such barracks as were never before seen in the world, and which look like monuments of the wealth of the country; and if you doubt all this, I can only refer you to the bills they have sent in to the amount of ten millions during the last ten years, and they tell me that they have spent this clear, without counting the cost of establishments. It is true that the nasty climate sometimes compelled me to shift the troops, and that some of the barracks are reported to have tumbled down, but

in great affairs conducted on outlying estates you must expect some waste.* Then, you know, I always had a weakness for gaols. My Indian agents knew that, and how I always liked to have the poor prisoners looked after and made as comfortable as possible, and nothing has pleased me so much as the reports I've got on this head. They filter all the water, both for cooking and drinking,

* "The frequent recurrence of accidents to edifices erected by the Public Works Department, has passed into a by-word; and buildings that fall down before they are finished, or shortly after completion, and have to be reconstructed, are called by those who have the heart to joke upon such subjects, 'reproductive] works.' This may seem incredible to some who hear me. Yet last year a church erected at Jubbulpore, by the Public Works Department, had to be blown up because it was unsafe, shortly after completion. And I see by the last file of papers just received, that the artillery barracks at the same place, now just completed, will have to be blown up from the same cause. About two years ago the barracks at Nuseerabad fell down, fortunately, I believe, without causing any loss of life. I recollect, however, another instance of a barrack falling down from the same cause (defect in construction), where the consequences were far more serious, and a large number of casualties occurred—men, women, and children of H.M. 54th Regiment being crushed under the ruins. I recollect a large church was erected at Peshawur, close to my own house; it was adapted for holding, I suppose, upwards of a thousand people. The walls were completed, but one morning all had disappeared. There had been either a slight shock from earthquake, or a gale of wind in the night, and they were all levelled with the ground. How long the new High Courts in Calcutta have been in building, and how many times they have fallen down, there are probably some here who can tell us."—From a paper by Mr. Prichard, read June 15, 1870, at a meeting of the Society of Arts. Mr. Prichard states subsequently, that many of the palatial barracks that have not yet fallen down will certainly be useless from various causes.

so carefully, and the bathing arrangements are so very complete; their dress, too, is all that I could wish, and my medical officers send me in long accounts annually which are so valuable that they are always printed in large clear type, and on the finest paper. The diet of the poor fellows, too, is carefully adjusted, and, by the aid of chemical science, we can now regulate to a nicety the quantity of nitrogen which is required to keep them in good health, so that when set at large to resume their original callings, their friends have an excellent opportunity of comparing my benignant arrangements with the way in which prisoners used formerly to be treated. Talking of nitrogen reminds me that I have always thought that the peoples of India are far too poorly fed, and that an increased supply of fish would add much to their weight and vigour. Here my agents consulted a certain Dr. Day, who very soon reported (see my beautiful report on the moral and material condition of India for 1868-69) that 'fish supplies the nitrogenous element without which existence is impossible, and which rice, the staple of the country, does not possess.' This, you know, is really an important discovery, and one never before made, and Dr. Day is now tearing all over my Indian estates, and as soon as I have got his plans in I mean to have a fish department, whose sole business will be to

look after the nitrogenous requirements of the people. The doctor is a sharp fellow, I can tell you, and has already discovered that crocodiles eat the fish, and that some fish bury themselves two feet deep in the mud, and seem to be all the better for it, for they come out quite lively and in good condition. But the fact is, that if I were to tell you all the good my agents have done, and are going to do, I should never have done. But before you go on with your list of grievances, I must tell you about my agricultural measures, just to show you that I neglect nothing that can possibly be of use. You know very well what wonders we have been doing of late in that way, and what wonders in the way of steam-ploughs, reaping, and scores of other machines have come to pass into common use on my home estate. Well, my Indian agents were always writing home to say that the reason they couldn't get enough out of the people was because the people didn't know how to get enough out of the soil, and that an effort should really be made just to lead the way, and teach the people at least the rudiments of scientific agriculture. This scheme took my fancy hugely, and the reasoning of my Indian agents seemed so clear that I at once told them that they might go ahead without any further reference to me on the subject. And they did set to work, and with extraordinary vigour,

and if you doubt that you have only to look at the bills I have paid for agricultural exhibitions. Why, there was one I had at Calcutta that cost four thousand pounds, and I am told that the natives did open their eyes extremely wide when they saw the engines, and thrashing machines, and ploughs. Some people said that they opened their eyes at the way I lavished money on things quite unsuited to the ways and means of the natives; but I didn't believe a word of it, for my Indian agents wrote and told me that the exhibition was 'a great success in every way.' Still, there did seem to be some doubts on the subject, and, if you remember there was an impertinent fellow named Prichard who laughed at the whole thing, and in especial made himself very merry at my expense, because I gave a prize for elephants (some people, by the way, say that they are the only animals in India fit to draw the implements sent out); or perhaps it was because, when my judges went to pick out the prize elephant, they discovered that none of them knew one elephant from another. And now, I am not going to say a word more, but the fact is I've been so carried away by all these schemes for the good of the people (and I haven't mentioned half of what my agents have done) that I have quite forgotten you and your grievances."

Finding that you had quite done, my dear John,

and that I now had some chance of a hearing, I recommenced exactly where I left off, and, though you moved somewhat impatiently in your chair, I proceeded to hint as quietly as possible that what Melvil had told you about "the excess of exports over imports being regularly liquidated in silver" was all nonsense, and very mischievous nonsense too, John, for it had led you into laying out money in all manner of ways, and to an extent that your Indian estates couldn't possibly afford. Now, I am not going into these tiresome figures here, and if you choose you can easily get up the entire subject by referring to your Indian blue books. It will be sufficient to say that I quite satisfied you from Melvil's own figures that his conclusions were absurd, and that, so far from capital being accumulated in the hands of the inhabitants of your Indian estates, it was steadily being drained away, and to an extent that must always keep the property poor, and totally unable to bear anything but the lightest taxation, and the very cheapest of administrations. The moment you were satisfied of this, John, your face, I may mention, became extremely long, for, with all the confusion you have got into, from ignorance of how matters really stand as regards your Indian property, you had quite enough sense to see that stones cannot be got to yield blood, at least by any process hitherto discovered. You

were still, however, not quite clear as to the exact method by which so much of the soil of India is so steadily carried over to supply top dressing for your fields at home, and you seemed to think that, as long as the people of India got paid for their produce, things could not be very far wrong. But I soon showed you that, though they got paid for their produce, they had to take a great deal of the money and hand it over to your numerous agents, who either returned home with a large proportion of the money and spent it all over Europe, or sent large quantities home regularly to be spent by their families, or the parts of families they were obliged to keep in England. I also pointed out that the profits made by planters, engineers, railway officials, lawyers, barristers, and bankers, instead of remaining in India to be employed in developing the resources of the country, and so adding to its general wealth, were carried over here as fast as possible, to be spent in such a way that hardly any return was made to India in any shape whatever. I then referred you, my dear John, to your Indian estimates for 1871, and pointing to the item of nine millions to be drawn on your agents in India to defray expenses in this country, just asked you to add that to the money sent over in other ways. What the whole amount of capital actually deported from your Indian to enrich your home

estates actually amount to, it is of course impossible to say, but we may put it down as at least twelve millions a year, which does not return to India in any shape that can possibly add to the general wealth of the property. When you heard all this, my dear John, you got very grave indeed, and ejaculated, "God bless me, this seems to be absenteeism with a vengeance, and on a scale I never heard of before! No wonder that my Indian agents are at their wits' ends for money, and that they complain of want of expansiveness in the profits of the concern. Curse these agents of mine—how they have imposed on me! If I had only known all this before, I should have told them to work my Indian estates a deal cheaper, and in a different fashion altogether. Why, as far as I can see at present, I've been simply treating a country where labour is at two shillings a week like one with labour at two shillings a day." To these remarks, my dear John, I confessed I listened with great cheerfulness, for one of the first things towards reforming shaky estates is to take an accurate and sober view of the resources and general capabilities of the concern in general, with a view of cutting one's coat according to one's cloth, and if you will only resolve to do that for the future, John, it will be all the better for everybody. I then proceeded to apologize for having taken up so much of your time in

calling your attention to the necessity of carefully estimating the resources of your Indian property, and urged as my reason for doing so that your councillors, instead of clearly ascertaining the base they have to work upon, have occupied all their time in devising fresh taxes, and in financial jugglery of one kind and another, quite forgetting that all these operations will never turn a poor hand-to-mouth country into one full of accumulated capital. Now, my dear John, you may call in all the financial jugglers in Europe, and add them to the finance committee you have appointed from amongst your home agents, and you'll never be a bit the better unless you put the screw on to a tremendous extent, and then you'll grind the people on your Indian estates into open rebellion, and the whole concern will burst up, and then you'll simply have to pay all the debts out of your home estates. You see, my dear John, I am very anxious to explain all this very fully to you, because you'll soon have to make up your mind as to what you are going to do as regards your Indian property; and, whatever your financial jugglers may propose, I tell you plainly that your real choice is practically confined to one of these two points. You must either go on borrowing more money on the security of the concern, or you must keep down expenses, and by a good many millions a year too, if you

wish to act with ordinary prudence; for, my dear John, the plain truth is that you are quite at the end of your tether, and if you have another Indian rebellion to pay for (a thing that you may look upon with certainty in the event of a war with Russia), the addition to your debt charges will be such that you will never see a clean balance sheet again; or, I should rather say, that you will never see a balance of any sort again, for the sheets your agents have hitherto presented have never had anything more than a nominal approach to cleanliness.

At this point of the conversation, my dear John, you broke in and asked me how I knew that additional taxes, and especially the income-tax, and local cesses of one kind and another, would produce serious discontent if they were not imposed to an exorbitant extent. "Why," you continued, "it was only on the 11th of last March that the *Times* told me that there really couldn't be much to complain of in the income-tax, seeing that only thirteen people had complained of being unjustly charged." At such an argument, coming from such a quarter, my very soul sunk clean away, and I had already anticipated far more than the beginning of the end. But, after a long pause of blank amazement, I at last rallied, and replied, that to you, my dear John, and to your happy subjects in these islands, the argument, no doubt, must sound very natural and

entirely conclusive; but to those who have lived amongst the people as I have done, it is the exact measure of the depth of that tremendous gulf to the brink of which you are so rapidly approaching. In other words, it is the melancholy gauge of your ignorance of the real condition of things as existing throughout the length and breadth of your Indian estates. Did it never occur to you, my dear John, to inquire into the meaning of the "satirical titter" that went round the assembly at Calcutta the other day, when your finance minister, with a gravity which could only have been maintained in the steaming climate of Bengal, said that all the inquiries throughout your Indian estates had shown that hardly any complaints were made against the income-tax? Why, the wonder really is that the thirteen people were to be found who were bold enough to complain, for you little know what complaining in India really means; you little know what it is to try "sitting at Rome and striving with the Pope." Long ago, John, they used to say in Europe, "Offend one monk and the cowls of all monks will flutter as far as Rome." Well, in India it may be said, offend one native official and you have offended all who can possibly interfere with you in any way, and you will be a marked man to the end of your days. Now, my dear John, I have no intention here of reminding you of all the proofs

I gave you on this head, and it will be quite sufficient if I repeat the caution I then gave you as to mistrusting those councillors who have already led you like a sheep to the slaughter, by means of arguments and statements which would be quite satisfactory in England, but which are entirely illusive when dealing with the condition of things existing on your Indian property. What I had said about the income-tax evidently made some impression on you, but you were still not quite satisfied, and wanted to know how a tax of this sort could cause a wide-spread discontent when only a very small proportion of the population came under the Act. At this question I was again filled with despair—despair for India and despair for England; for it showed me how extremely difficult it is for an Englishman to comprehend the situation of affairs in India. To recapitulate, my dear John, even the heads of my reply to this question, which seemed so very natural to you, would occupy far too much space, and I have only room to remind you that I satisfactorily showed you that, in the hands of native officials, the very name of a new tax is readily converted into an instrument of oppression, because there is no channel of communication between the Government and the masses. The unfortunate people, I continued, have no means of knowing to whom your agents wish to extend an

Act They can't read, they have no newspapers in the remoter districts. A tax-gatherer comes and tells them they are liable for this tax or that, and that is all the information the people have on the subject. To pay may be unpleasant, but to complain is ruin and worry to the end of their days, and so they pay. Thus, you see, my dear John, that a tax may be unobjectionable enough in theory, but, with the machinery at your disposal in India, may be turned into an intolerable engine of oppression. Out of the many instances I gave you as to the way that the Acts may be taken advantage of by unscrupulous minor officials, I may just repeat one as an illustration. In the part of the country, John, where I live in India, your agents introduced a forest conservancy Act, and you very considerately added that all natives might use the trees growing on their own lands, but that they would have to pay for any they might require out of forests which belonged to Government. But the petty native officials extended the Act to all manner of trees growing anywhere, and compelled the people to pay for timber which they had cut down for building purposes, and which was growing on their own lands. This very natural process of extortion may seem impossible to you, my dear John, but some of the farmers complained to me on the subject, and showed me receipts for the money

in a regular government form. These receipts I forwarded to one of your agents, and the little bit of rascality was stopped, at least in my particular neighbourhood. But the fact was that the people had no means of knowing that the demands of these extortioners were not sanctioned by your agents. So you see, my dear John, that when any new tax is started the petty officials pocket a deal of money, and you have to pocket an amount of unpopularity which you will never be able to gauge, or even hear of till the mine explodes and you are blown clean out of the country.

At this stage of the discussion, my dear John, you looked sorely perplexed, and asked me what on earth was to be done, and why I expected to be believed as if I was some prophet. This was a question I had fully anticipated, and I discreetly replied, that I didn't expect you to believe me, at least till you had heard a good deal more on the subject from others, and that I should be quite contented if you would only go so far as not to disbelieve me altogether. I then proceeded to point out that you should neither believe nor disbelieve anything or anybody, but set to work, and examine thoroughly into the state of your Indian property. Here you got very angry indeed, and with difficulty restrained your feelings of impatience. After a short struggle, however, you broke

out with, "My good man, and is this really all you have got to suggest after all this talk? Why, I told you before that I had appointed a committee to inquire into the finances of my Indian estates." This outburst, if you remember, I received with becoming and respectful submission; and feeling that the key of the position was nearly within my grasp, and that the result entirely depended on my skill in turning it, I humbly asked you, my dear John, how you meant to commence your investigations. To this you replied, that you had great confidence in your home agents, and that you meant to leave the committee to conduct the inquiry in any way they pleased. Upon this I observed that I had an equal confidence in the committee in some respects, but that it would be far more satisfactory if, at the outset, you were clearly to lay down the points most essential for determination, and on which all other points must rest. I then proceeded to insinuate that the only sequence of inquiry that could be at all successful would be—

I. To inquire into the material condition of the people, and into the resources of the country, and especially with the view of ascertaining whether the country is or is not accumulating capital.

II. To inquire into the practical working of the internal administration of the country, with the

view of ascertaining whether new taxes (as for instance the income-tax and local cesses) can be collected without extortion and oppression.

Now, my dear John, unless these points are ascertained in the first instance, you will be working entirely in the dark, and your finance committee will turn out to be a snare and a delusion; for these, I repeat, are the points which must determine your whole financial policy. To this reasoning of mine you fully assented, but you very justly observed, that to talk about information as regards outlying estates, and to obtain it, are two very different things, and that you'd like to hear my plans for collecting information. Thereupon, my dear John, you will remember that I recommended you immediately to—

I. Appoint a commission to proceed to your Indian property, and investigate matters on the spot.

II. To collect all the information possible, by examining witnesses in this country.

III. To start the American system of encouraging each officer in your employ to send you annually, for your private inspection, his free opinion on the working of Government enactments.

The first measure, my dear John, is evidently the measure of measures; the second is not at all to be despised; while the third cannot be expected to be of much service for some years, or until your

officers have learnt that they may express their opinions with entire freedom, without there being the slightest fear of their suffering in your good graces for uttering unpalatable truths. To all this you listened with a smile of approval, but you proceeded to say, "This sounds all very well, and would, no doubt, provide me with a wide base, but several years must elapse before all this information can be satisfactorily collected, and what am I to do in the meantime?" But for this question of yours I was fully prepared; and I then pointed out that, in the meantime, as a provisional measure, you should keep down expenses, build no more bridges than are absolutely necessary, no more barracks, no more public offices, no more gaols. I also suggested that you should stop all funds for English education, all grants-in-aid to missionary schools (principally because they spend so much on English education), and all railway works, except those required to complete lines already commenced. Besides this you should at once prepare to reduce the number of highly paid English officials.* To do all this, John, you must harden

* It seems almost superfluous to add, that it is much better for India to have a corrupt native agency than a pure European one. The first, it is true, would rob the people. But the second, it must be borne in mind, would rob them far more effectually by simply deporting a large proportion of the profits of the soil to England; while the peculations of a native agency would be sure, in the end, to be spent in useful works, in

your heart. Your Indian agents will shout out to you to beware of the gulf of retrogression; but do you go on your way rejoicing, and retort upon them that it is far more important to beware of the gulf of bankruptcy. And here I had fully intended leaving off, but, as you seemed to be in a tolerably good humour, I thought it was as well to hint that there is just one thing, and one only, that you should not put a stopper on, and that is on irrigation works; as they had always been and will always be the whole key to the successful management of Indian properties. In Eastern countries, I continued, irrigation is all that the camel is to the desert Arab, or the canoe to the sea-board savage. In short, my dear John, I observed that if you once look after your irrigation, you may leave everything else to look after itself. "And why," you asked, "should I not put off this piece of expenditure too until I see my way quite clearly?" To this I replied, that the key of finance is population, and the key of population food, and the key of food water; and that if you neglect your waterworks your

employing labour of various kinds, and in adding to the general wealth of the country. But at present the Indians have all the evils of a European agency, and are very little the better. The European agency is extensive enough to cause an enormons drain on the resources of a poor country, but it is not extensive enough to do away with the peculations of the petty officials who have to be bribed as much as, and in many instances even more, than they ever were before.

financial resources are sure to be injured by famines. "Famines, sir!" you exclaimed, "famines! Why, at the very commencement of our conversation I told you that Duff had said, in his Indian budget speech, that 'fortune has conspicuously favoured us of late,' and that we hadn't had any sort of what he called 'overpowering physical disasters' for the last two years." To this, John, I said nothing at all, you may remember, but producing from my pocket a neat little volume of Indian famine literature for the last ten years, just asked you to cast your eye over the famine facts of those two years throughout which, according to Duff's account, fortune had so conspicuously favoured you. While you turned over page after page of the most sickening details that man ever read, I carefully scanned your countenance, and what I read there gave me hopes for your Indian estates that I had never ventured to entertain before. At length you threw down the volume, and with a sigh of relief said, "Well, I see it all now, that's one comfort, and that what one of my English agents said the other day about my being like a man sitting on a volcano is only too true, and that if my agents go on as they have been doing, I have simply to make my choice between the volcano of rebellion or the gulf of bankruptcy. Why, it now seems to me as clear as noonday that

my agents have commenced by heightening and gilding the pyramid, instead of by widening the base by the simple process of preserving the lives and adding to the resources of the agricultural classes on whom I depend so entirely for keeping the concern afloat." At this point of the conversation, and finding that so much had been gained, I made a profound salaam and judiciously withdrew, with the intention of resuming the discussion of your Indian affairs on the very next opportunity that might occur.

As I wended my way home, however, pondering, as I went, on the exceeding difficulty of getting crooked sticks straight again, a messenger came running after me to tell me that there was just one point on which you wanted an immediate answer. On again entering the room I had left you sitting in, you may remember, my dear John, that you said you would like to hear what I had to say as to the carrying out of irrigation works, as there seemed to be such a difference of opinion as to the way of setting to work. "Some," you continued, "tell me to go ahead and borrow more money to lay out on waterworks of one kind and another, while others tell me that won't do at all, and that they should all be paid for out of the current income of the concern. The *Times*, in especial, tells me that it won't do at all to discount the future as regards managing

my Indian estates." To this, my dear John, I replied that the *Times* is perfectly right, not, however, because it is in itself impolitic to borrow capital to lay out on reproductive works, but because your agents are not fit to be trusted with the money. Here you became indignant and asked me if I meant to accuse your agents of peculation. You may remember, however, that I speedily reassured you on this point, and that none of your money found its way into their pockets, except in the shape of salaries; but I pointed out at the same time that your agents are but human, and that no human beings as yet discovered in the world are fit to be trusted with the expenditure of public money where neither watch nor control is kept on the expenditure by the representatives of the people. I then proceeded to ask you how you could possibly expect your agents to form an exception to all human history. Without waiting for a reply, I then pointed, as rapidly as possible, to the numerous evidences which showed that your agents certainly formed no exception to the rule. I pointed to the ten millions spent on barracks during the last ten years; to departments erected which were entirely superfluous; to the department of public works, which was brought into being with such little forethought that your agents had to go out into the highways and byways and fetch in military

officers who were wholly without engineering experience; to money squandered in agricultural exhibitions which were at once a loss and a laughing-stock; to thousands spent in printing useless returns, and to money recklessly spent on many things too numerous for recapitulation here. And finally I pointed to the hundreds of thousands of lives ruthlessly and barbarously sacrificed to a culpable neglect of remedies, which could have been easily and readily applied.* Pointing, then, to all

* The following facts show clearly that the Government in India can be as distinctly accused of murdering the people of India, as Mr. Gladstone could be accused of murdering the people of Ireland were he to abstain from feeding them in the event of an overwhelming famine. If the reader will only imagine the greater part of Ireland strewed with corpses, while shiploads of grain were being sent from Liverpool to India, he will then have an exact parallel to what took place under our eminently paternal Government in the East. The tale is well told in the following letter :—

"THE TRUTH ABOUT THE ORISSA FAMINE.

"TO THE EDITOR OF THE ASIATIC.

"SIR,—Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji and Sir Arthur Cotton have, I see by your report of their speeches before the Society of Arts, rejected the excuses made for Sir Cecil Beadon's shortcomings in the matter of the Orissa famine. At the time, Sir Cecil's friends in Parliament and in the press asserted that the coast of Orissa is inaccessible to shipping for great part of the year, from the heavy surf and entire want of harbours. Others among his apologists intimated that neither supplies nor shipping were available. These excuses were accepted, and Sir Cecil was not treated like Governor Eyre. As I was at Chittagong during the Orissa famine, I can certify that there were usually over thirty ships in the harbour there loading rice, only three days' sail from Balasore. The commissioner of Chittagong, had he been authorised to do so by the Government of Bengal, could and would have stopped

this experience of the past, I asked you how you could expect a different result for the future if the same machinery was continued; and clearly pointed out to you, that if you went on borrowing more money you would simply drive on the way to bankruptcy faster than you are doing at present. In fact, my dear John, the only check you can possibly have on the present waste of public money is by limiting the amount of money to be wasted. I was just proceeding, I may remind you, to point out my plans for the entire reconstruction of your Indian agency, when a messenger arrived, to say that your presence was immediately required on some urgent business; so, begging me to call again another day, you bid me graciously good-bye.

these ships, despatched them to Balasore and Dumrah, on the coast of Orissa, and discharged the cargoes there. I can vouch that Balasore is accessible to ships at all seasons of the year, as it lies, not on an open coast, but some miles up the river Burra Balong. Dumrah also lies on an inlet equally safe from surf. I have no hesitation in saying that, had the Government of Bengal willed it, half a million of human lives might have been saved. The Commissioner of Orissa must, I apprehend, have apprised the Government of Bengal of the fact that the coast was quite accessible, of which he could hardly be ignorant. If the Government of Bengal remained in ignorance of the accessible harbours on the coast of Orissa, part of the blame must rest upon the Commissioner of Orissa; but the Government of Bengal cannot be thereby excused for such gross ignorance and incapacity. How can the natives of India believe in our professions of regard when the lives of hundreds of thousands among them are sacrificed by 'blunders worse than crimes,' and the perpetrators are not even censured?—I am, &c.

"*March* 24, 1871. "MONITOR."

II.

MY DEAR JOHN,—In my last letter concerning your Indian affairs I reminded you of the principal points of our first conversation, which, you may remember, was interrupted by your presence being required in order to attend to some business of pressing importance. When leaving, you begged me to call another day, and this gave me an opportunity of explaining to you at considerable length my schemes for the entire reconstruction of your Indian agency. My remarks were as usual repeatedly interrupted by objections and criticisms of one kind or another, many of which sounded so plausible that I really think I may as well remind you of nearly the whole conversation, to the end that you may have everything that can be said regarding your Indian Estates put into a convenient and portable shape.

Just as I was about to lay before you a scheme for starting the people of India on the high road to a solid and lasting civilisation, you may remember

that you expressed a desire before going further into the matter to offer a few remarks on the contents of my last letter, which you were pleased to say you had thought over long and seriously. With the general correctness of the views I had expressed you said that you felt no doubt whatever, as there could be no possible argument against the advisability of shutting out for ever the idea of expecting to find fresh resources by devising new methods of taxation, and still less could there be as to pulling the expenses of the agency far within its present income. "But," you continued, "when you come to talk to me of the advisability of sending a commission to India to enquire into the internal working of the administration, I confess I don't think it would answer at all. I can quite understand that an independent commission to enquire into and report on the resources and capabilities of the country would be of great advantage in the way of gauging the general prospects of the concern, but for the commission to go any further would, I think, be impolitic, and some would even go so far as to say dangerous. You know very well that the inhabitants of my Indian estates are remarkable for a cautious reticence, and that, from the want of confidence that exists between them and my agents, you could rely upon the people saying anything that they happened to think the

commissioners would like to hear, and the result would be that I should be supplied with a lot of statements as perplexing as my Indian accounts generally are. If I could for one moment suppose that the natives would understand the meaning of such a commission, and give evidence before it fairly and freely, it would be another affair altogether: but they would look upon the whole thing as a clear proof that I thought my Indian agents were either fools or swindlers, or both, so that not only would no good arise from such an enquiry, but the hands of my agents would be much weakened, and they would fall even into greater disrepute than they seem to enjoy at present." To this I answered, that I had only recommended a desperate remedy for a desperate state of things, and if you clearly recognised the principle of shutting up all ideas of finding new methods of taxation, and pulling your expenses far within your income, there would be no need for any local enquiry into the internal administration of the country. But, my dear John, instead of boldly proclaiming that you don't mean to levy more taxes, I find everywhere proofs that your Indian agents will not forego the idea of raising more money than they have hitherto done, and if they will not forego the idea, no investigation that is likely to provide a remedy can equal or even approach the disease. You know very well

that it was only the other day that your agents at Bombay seriously proposed to tax feasts where the host invited more than a certain number of guests —an ingenious proposition, truly, and one that can only be clearly understood if you supposed that you had a tax on Christmas dinners in this country, and that tax-gatherers were appointed to count the number of the guests as they left the dining-room, in order to see whether their number came within the taxable limit. Then your agents started the ingenious idea of taxing marriages, or, in other words, of offering premiums for the multiplication of those unsanctified unions which are so deeply deplored by Belgravian mothers. Why, my dear John, there is no absurdity in the shape of taxation that your agents do not seem equal to proposing, and the wilder the scheme the better they seem to like it. It would be difficult, of course, under these circumstances, to suggest anything fresh, but I might suggest to them that a less objectionable impost than any tax they have proposed for some years would be a tax on fowls: this proposition, however, I cannot say is quite original, as it was suggested to me by a belief once current in the part of India where I live, to the effect that such a tax was really to be established, and that the rate was to be sevenpence on every twenty fowls. This is a fact you may hardly think worth mentioning, but it is

just one of those symptoms of uneasiness as to what is to come next, the signs of which are daily becoming more frequent. Here you observed that the inhabitants of your Indian estates were easily alarmed, and that they seemed to credit wilder reports than people in the world. Upon this, my dear John, you may remember that I asked as to what were the causes of there being so many reports to credit. "Why," you replied, "that is much more easily asked than answered; but I suppose it must be owing to the fact that, owing to the overwhelming forces of nature, the imagination is more active in tropical climates." Now, my dear John, the imagination may be more excitable in hot than cold climates; but if the following financial experiments are not sufficient to inflame the imagination of an Esquimaux or a Greenlander, I should think it an extremely remarkable circumstance. But my memory, if you remember, was entirely unable to reproduce the multitude of taxational novelties which had been either proposed or adopted during the last thirteen years; so producing from my pocket a neat little pamphlet,* I proceeded to condense the chapter on "The Progress of Taxation since the Mutiny." Before, however, commencing to enumerate the heads of the

* *The Logic of Indian Deficit.* By James Geddes. Part I. Williams and Norgate, London.

taxational items, I particularly called your attention to the condition of your Indian estates, in order to show you that the worrying action of your agents could have been caused by nothing but their own culpable want of foresight. Were gigantic efforts being made to pay off the Indian National Debt? Were there wars? Were there long periods of depression in trade, or general stagnation either in mercantile or agricultural enterprise? On the contrary, during those years since the Mutiny, your property has enjoyed an almost unbroken peace, and there has been an amount of prosperity which is entirely without precedent in the whole history of India. And yet, in spite of all this peace and prosperity, your agents have contrived, by a shameful maladministration of the affairs of the country, to make the people feel daily more worried, and, in consequence, daily more discontented with you and your government. And, my dear John, you will observe that, in order to insure a perfect uniformity in their methods of administration, your agents have contrived to make themselves unpopular with all your subjects, both dark and white—a result that could only have been attained by the very worst of governments. If this unpopularity had been incurred in order to pay off the National Debt, or with the view of re-establishing your affairs on a firmer financial basis, it might

have been excusable (though even then it may be doubted whether, considering the nature of our position in India, any end could justify the sacrifice of popularity), but, as you will observe, the whole tendency of the administration is towards bankruptcy. In a word, your agents have created universal discontent; and, with all their financial devices, have spent annually, for the last ten years, about a million and a half more than they have received.* Here you reminded me that I was wandering from the point, and observed that I had better get on with my chapter of financial experiments, as it seemed to be a pretty long one.

Drawing a long breath I commenced, you will remember, with 1859, and pointed out that in that

* Mr. J. M. Maclean, in his pamphlet entitled *The Indian Deficit and the Income Tax* (published by F. Algar, London), has stated the facts as follows:—

"The net Indian Deficit for the fifteen years from 1856—57 to 1870—71 amounted to £45,377,743, being at the rate of more than three and one-fifth millions sterling a-year. But these fifteen years included the period of the Mutiny, which for a time completely deranged the finances, and which must be held accountable for three-fourths of the excess of expenditure over revenue. Limiting our view, then, in justice to the Indian Government, to the accounts of the ten years of peace, from 1861—62 to 1870—71, in which India enjoyed perfect rest, and opportunities of steady progress were quoted in her history, we find that the net deficit of these ten years was £11,534,030, showing an average of £1,153,400 a-year. Measured by the increase of the Public Debt during the same period, the yearly excess of expenditure must have been just a million and a half."

year import duties were enormously increased, and many even quadrupled, and that, further, an export duty of 3 per cent. was imposed on all the principal staples of Indian produce. In fact the eagerness of your agents was so great that imported iron was taxed 10 per cent. till 1863. It was then, however, lessened, because your agents discovered at last that if they got the duty on one hand they had to pay interest on most of the receipts with the other, seeing that the bulk of the iron was coming to the railway companies whose dividends were guaranteed by Government. Passing now to 1860—61 we shall find a good deal to notice, and, to commence with, I may observe that your agents maintained in and after that year a tax on saltpetre which actually ruined the entire trade in this once important staple. Your agents subsequently discovered their blunder and made some remissions, which were either too small, or came too late, for the last thing of importance that has been heard in connection with the trade is, that the natives formerly employed in it perished in large numbers in the famine of 1866. This extinction of a valuable trade seems pretty well for a beginning, but it is merely tarts and cheesecakes as to what is to follow. The salt duty was increased 25 per cent. in Bengal, $12\frac{3}{4}$ per cent. in Madras, and 33 per cent. in Bombay. In this

blessed year was also passed an income tax of 2 per cent. (about $4\frac{3}{4}d.$ in the pound) on all incomes between £20 and £50, and a tax of 4 per cent. (or about $9\frac{1}{2}d.$ in the pound) on incomes above £50. There was also a proposed license fee which had to be abandoned. Import duties on wines and beers were largely increased, and on some kinds of wines to as much as 50 per cent., while 100 per cent. was charged on foreign tobacco. The stamp duties too were largely extended and augmented. The land tax was also increased upon old and extended to new soils, and so ended this memorable season. In 1862—63 your agents, my dear John, seem somewhat to have exhausted their money-raising expedients. They, however, passed a license tax which was expected to reach five millions of artisans, mechanics, and traders, but this was arrested on political grounds after it had become law.

Your Indian agents never seem to see the political grounds until after the mischief is done. The fact is, my dear John, that they have not been statesmen at all of late years. They have been nothing but a set of deeply-involved tax-gatherers, who have been so hard up that they can see money, but nothing else. This, you replied, seemed really to have some truth in it, though stated a good deal too strongly; but you observed that, though in

conversation a good deal of latitude is allowed, you would rather that I stuck closely to the point. This reproof I of course received with becoming submission, and at once proceeded to enumerate the remaining financial novelties of the season, which was marked by a slight ebb in assessed taxes, and of some of the customs most objected to by Europeans. The taxes on the Indians, however—those most felt by them—the salt and stamp duties—remained unaltered, while land revenue was augmented. The income tax on incomes below £50 was graciously remitted, as it had been found to cost 30 per cent. of the receipts on mere collection. On the other hand, a contribution of £48,664 was levied on municipal funds on behalf of the Imperial Exchequer for Mofussil Town Police; and thus terminated the season of 1861—62. In the season of 1862—63 there is not much to notice, except that the 4 per cent. income tax was reduced to 3 per cent. But against this we have to place the fact that the contributions to the Imperial Exchequer from municipal funds were nearly doubled. In 1864—65 the customs duties underwent a fresh manipulation, which resulted in an increase of taxation under this head, and, under the auspices of a financial juggler, who, to experience gained in the Indian Civil Service, was supposed to have added all that Europe could

teach, the brilliant idea of clapping an export tax upon all the young industries of India was started. In order, too, that trade in general might be equally startled, the tax was imposed so suddenly that an acquaintance of mine who was shipping a quantity of coffee had all his calculations thrown into confusion. To the best of my recollection the tax was imposed by a telegram; but luckily there was a wire to England, and the tax was at once remitted by an order from home. In 1865—66 the salt tax was again augmented in Bombay, and the levies from the municipalities again increased. In 1866—67 the salt tax was again increased in Madras, and this was the fourth increase of the tax in that Presidency within nine years. It had the effect of raising the selling price of salt by 70 per cent. within that period. In 1867—68 your agents seemed to have aroused themselves with a vengeance, and bent to the task of ruining you with renewed vigour. They commenced by again raising the export duties on grain. Secondly, they fell upon the stamp duties,* which they increased to an enormous rate; and thirdly, your

We have had in ten years (1860 to 1869) six different Stamp Acts —the second tinkering the first, the third repealing both, the fourth repealing half the third, the fifth repealing the other half, the sixth repealing the fourth, and all these six ignoring the previous old one which had done duty for half a century.—*Calcutta Review*, Oct., 1870. Quoted by Mr. James Geddes.

agents (and this is worth mentioning to show what straits they must have been driven to for money) put a trifling addition of 50 per cent. on the duties levied on some wines. Fourthly, they started an assessed tax in the shape of a license tax on artisans and sundry professional classes, the rate averaging from 1 to 2 per cent. In 1868—69 this assessed tax underwent another change, and was turned into a certificate tax of about 1½ per cent. on certain incomes of £50 and upwards. In this year, too, the contribution to the Imperial Exchequer from municipal funds for Mofussil Town Police, which it may be remembered stood at £48,664 in 1862—63, had risen to no less than £241,252. In this year also, a further measure of taxation in the shape of canal cesses was proposed; but this was vetoed by the Home Council, and no wonder, for the Indian Government seriously intended to make canals, and charge the people for the water whether they used it or not, and at the rate of about 7 per cent. on the capital outlay. In 1869—70 we may commence our examination of novelties with the assessed tax, which underwent a fourth alteration under the style of an income tax. Incomes from land and from Indian-held securities had been exempted from assessment under the license tax and the certificate tax. These exemptions were now set aside, and the

reach of the tax much extended. But even this was not sufficient, and in the middle of the year the income tax was suddenly increased by 1 per cent. for the latter half of the year. In this year the salt taxes of Madras and Bombay experienced another great rise, and this augmentation made the fifth within the ten years previous. This too was imposed suddenly, in the middle of the year.

At this point, my dear John, you may remember that your patience very nearly gave way, and though I assured you that I had only enumerated the most important alterations, you said you were sick of the subject, and that you were quite satisfied that your Indian agents were the most worrying set of people you had ever heard of, and that you now quite understood how the wildest taxational rumours were readily credited. I observed, however, that it would be a pity not to let me finish my story, as I was so very nearly through with it, and reading in your eye a reluctant consent, I proceeded to say that, in the year 1870—71, assessed taxes were again recast for the sixth time in the decade, and this involved a new series of assessment of incomes. The income-tax was raised to 7½*d.* in the pound; then there were new local cesses for Lower Bengal; and lastly, the eight Provincial Governments were to supplement provincial ways and means by new

cesses of some kind or other. What acts of folly, my dear John, these Governments may be thinking of perpetrating, or have already perpetrated, it is hardly worth while to enquire; but the proposed taxes on dinners and on marriages are sufficient indications of the general weakness of your Indian agents, and in fact these proposals are such evident symptoms of impending bankruptcy that I need not detain you any longer as regards this branch of the subject. "I should rather think not," you sarcastically replied; "why, such alarming signals of distress were never hoisted by any Government in the world. But the fact is that I have been so taken up with the concerns of my home estate that I have never once noticed all those evidences of decay, and my numerous agents, who seem to be as wanting in courage as they certainly are in common sense, have hoodwinked me completely. The long and short of it seems to be that they have made a mess of it, and, seeing that the inhabitants of my Indian estates are not represented in any sort of way, the temptation to put the best face on matters has proved to be so overpowering that I have had a rose-coloured picture displayed before my eyes, and no one has hitherto come forward to show me the grounds of discontent that really exist, and which must exist, if your enumeration of taxational experiments is correct. But the

worst of all this evidently is that this uncertainty and incessant alteration of taxation must add more and more to that general suspicion of what my Indian agents are going to do next. I have often heard of the instinctive suspiciousness of the inhabitants of my Indian estates, and this was generally attributed to the state of mind engendered by the misrule of the old native Governments; but whatever effect these Governments might have had in producing a want of confidence between the rulers and the ruled, it seems pretty certain that they could never have worked the people into such a state of suspicion as must have been engendered by all this chopping and changing and increase of taxation. One thing, however, I have determined on; and that is, that I will endeavour, from this time forward, to do away with all causes of suspicion, to the end that I may gain the entire confidence of the people. I shall make my agents give up this rapid development mania, and I shall proclaim, as widely as possible, that there shall be no increase of taxation, unless to defray war expenses or extraordinary contingencies. I shall also put a stop to the income-tax and all those worrying local cesses, and tell my agents to let the people alone for the future."

To this expression of intention, my dear John, I listened with great satisfaction, for, though I

have some schemes to propose tending to a solid civilisation, these schemes could never produce the smallest result unless you first of all gain the confidence of the people. When you have once gained their confidence (which you may easily do if you choose), and provided a channel of intercommunication between your agents and the people, they may then submit cheerfully to imposts for national undertakings which, on account of their dense ignorance, they are quite unable to comprehend the meaning of at present. But till you have provided this channel you had far better, as you propose, let things alone. Further on, my dear John, I will show you how to provide the channel aforesaid; but before doing so, I may just as well mention some other signs of want of confidence which are far from reassuring to those who have invested their money in Indian funds or railways.

I was asked the other day by a shrewd-headed north countryman, why it was that, whenever there is the slightest prospect of a rupture with Russia, a panic should immediately seize people in India, while no corresponding alarm manifested itself in this country. Now, this question is a great deal more easily asked than answered, and the only possible answer to it, I confess, is by no means consolatory. Here you interrupted me to suggest

that your English subjects in India had always been alarmed at the Eastward progress of Russia, and that these panics are probably handed on just as traditions are handed on. In answer to this, my dear John, you will remember that I pointed to the fact that the difficulties and the enormous expense of an attack on India from the North were considered almost insurmountable, and that the remote probability of such an attempt was quite insufficient to account for the panic that took possession of people towards the end of last year, when, in consequence of the Russian despatch on the Treaty of 1856, the prospect of a difference seemed possible. The real answer to the question is, I believe, to be found in the fact of your white subjects in India being too well acquainted with the growing discontent of the people, and their being totally unable to see their way out of the financial difficulties that would arise if you had another rebellion to put down. There is also the feeling that, in the event of a war with Russia, we should find our highway to India threatened, or even blocked up altogether. But the financial considerations would no doubt overtop all others. The English on your Indian estates see very plainly that the chain of taxation has already been strained to a dangerous extent, and that another rebellion, or even the temporary suspension of the

opium traffic, would involve the imposition of fresh taxes, which would in turn become the causes of fresh discontents, and ultimately of fresh disturbances, and so on until the Empire fell headlong into the great gulf of Bankruptcy. All this they can see very clearly, but the people on your home estates, from their ignorance of Indian affairs, cannot see it at all, and hence the extreme susceptibility of people in India, and the comparative indifference of the people in England. At this point of the conversation you said that you had heard quite enough of these evidences of want of confidence in the soundness of your Indian property; but I observed that, before proceeding further, it was impossible to pass over some awkward facts as regards the proportion and rapidly diminishing amount of Indian securities held by your native subjects in the East.

You are aware, my dear John, that the nett liabilities (deducting, of course, all available assets) of the Indian Government for money borrowed, inclusive of railway stock guaranteed, amount at the lowest to £195,000,000 sterling.* Now, who has lent all that money? Well, with the exception of 9 per cent. the whole is held by Englishmen; or, in other words, they have lent £179,000,000, while the native stake only amounts to £16,000,000. But

* Vide *The Logic of Indian Deficit*, ch. ii.

this is not the most ominous part of the statement by any means. Of late years the proportion of the native stake has been most seriously diminishing. Some say that it is because the natives can easily get 10 or 12 per cent. for their money, and are not, therefore, likely to invest it at 5 per cent. On this it has been well asked, what manner of policy can justify your agents in taking vast sums of money from the people to pay railway interest charges on works that yield at the best only from 3 to 4 per cent. on their capital outlay, while these sums, if left in the hands of the taxpayers, could have been laid out at 12 per cent.? But assuming that the natives do not invest more money in our funds because the interest is so low, this furnishes no explanation of the fact, that large numbers of natives who before the mutinies were satisfied with 5 per cent., seem to think that interest insufficient now. The real fact is, my dear John, that the natives are too well aware of the shaky nature of your Indian estates to trust you with their money. Nor have they voluntarily ever trusted you with as large a sum as £16,000,000, and a careful scrutiny shows that you cannot look upon anything like the whole of this sum as evidence of the security felt by the people in the continuity of your dominion. Part of the £16,000,000 is held by natives, because your agents make such

an investment an indispensable qualification for office. Another part represents property under wardships, in litigation, and properties under official control, which must by law be invested in Government securities, and part represents the properties of feudatory princes who happen to be in a minority, or under official control.

So you see, my dear John, that from no point of view can your Indian estates be regarded with anything like satisfaction. The panics that occur whenever there is a danger of a rupture with Russia, prove the insecurity felt by the white residents, and the scanty and diminishing stake held by the natives in Indian securities shows that they have as little confidence in the permanence of your hold on India. And yet in spite of all the evidences of danger with which you are surrounded, your agents, shutting their eyes resolutely to every warning, propose to borrow for railways another hundred millions, which they would never obtain a shilling of in this country did they not guarantee the interest; and if your agents are successful (as I have little doubt they will be) in raising this money, they will eventually get their liabilities up to nearly three hundred millions, almost all of which will be held by Englishmen; and the only security for the payment of this sum will depend upon our being

able to force Indian opium on the Chinese.* Now, do you suppose, my dear John, that your subjects in

* Mr. Maitland, a very competent judge, said in his speech on "The Finances of India" (vide *Journal of the East Indian Association*, vol. v., p. 118), "With reference to the opium duty, I have myself at different times, in this room, in letters, in newspapers, and in conversations with members of Parliament and others, endeavoured, as far as I could, having seen a great deal of the opium trade, to point out the very great danger of relying on that very important article of revenue. I should hardly do so again, but that I heard Mr. Grant Duff, the other night, speaking of the revenue for the year and a telegram he had received, use these words, that 'opium had come to the rescue.' . . . But if the Government of India trust too much to that—if they believe that opium will come to the rescue permanently, and relax in the smallest degree their endeavours to discover some other source of revenue which will supplement, or, in case of need, when the time has arrived, provide a substitute for the opium revenue, I am sure that they will incur very great danger indeed, *because all we hear from China shows that the increase of cultivation there has been very considerable indeed;* and sooner or later, I think, our Government will have to make up their mind to a very large reduction of their revenue from that source." But Persia also is appearing as a competitor, and, to the best of my recollection, sent opium to China of the value of half a million sterling last year. No wonder, then, that Mr. Maitland urges the Government not to relax in their endeavours to find fresh sources of taxation. But every expedient has been exhausted, and there is only the land to fall back on. And when we come to look at this source, which has hitherto been held sacred, we shall find that it has already been entrenched upon. The labouring peasant has not indeed been forced in direct terms to contribute an enhanced land-tax, but has been requested to call the increased demands on the paltry profit from his fields by the name of cesses, which are to cover the cost of new schools and roads. So that when the Government is driven back on the last and desperate remedy of directly raising more revenue from land, hard indeed will be the lot of the unhappy peasant. Were the subject not too serious, it would be matter for laughter to observe how speciously this last financial trick has been explained away; and it must be a

England, if told the plain truth, would lend any more money on the security of Indian revenue, nearly one-sixth of which (eight millions sterling) depends upon so precarious a source of income? But they know nothing of all this. They have heard of the evils of the opium traffic, but few of the thousands and thousands of investors in this country have any idea that they *entirely* depend upon that traffic for the payment of the interest due. They have relied with blind good faith on your agents conducting the affairs of your Indian estates with well-pronounced prudence. They have not analyzed the sources from which the Indian revenue is derived, and seeing that, as compared with the liabilities of European countries, the public debt of India seems far from alarming, they have opened their "money-bags freely and will open them again," as often as your agents want to borrow more money. Now, I ask you, my dear John, if, under these circumstances, you consider it fair to take the money of the widow and the orphan, the halt, the lame, and the blind, and lay it on the securities offered by your Indian agents. You may, if you choose, take

great comfort to the agricultural classes to learn, on the authority of Mr. John Strachey (*vide* a speech of his on the Indian Budget last year), that, till the imposition of these local cesses, they had never paid such a thing as taxes before, seeing that what they had hitherto paid was in reality rent which belonged to the State as superior proprietor.

the money of the people who are unfortunate enough to lend it to you, but if you do you are bound in common honesty to explain to them the precarious nature of the security your agents have to offer.

But there is yet another consideration. Why should you bind this vast Indian property on your shoulders with a chain of English gold worth hundreds of millions of pounds? Your Indian estates always have been, and at present are, of great value to your home property; but why should you not let them develop slowly and naturally, and so avoid pledging your subjects in England to such a tremendous extent? To this you replied that you supposed that your agents wanted, as far as you could see, to develop the resources of the country with the greatest possible speed, in order to accelerate the march of civilisation, and raise the peoples of India to their proper position in the ranks of nations. "Why," you continued, "just look at their magnificent efforts to raise the people in the intellectual scale. When I last saw you, you were pleased to sneer at the way they had been laying out money in barracks, and buildings, and departments, and agricultural exhibitions; and I must admit there was a good deal of truth in what you said; but whatever the weakness of my agents may have been in these respects, I feel

sure that their educational efforts must excite universal admiration. They got university men from England, and gave them splendid salaries; and I am assured on the best authority that critical lectures on Milton and Shakespeare may now be heard in India which would be appreciated by a select and learned English audience. But nowhere has the march of civilisation been so conspicuous as at Calcutta. The Hindoo intellect has there risen to its loftiest height. The thraldom of caste has been shaken, and that institution is already doomed to a speedy downfall. The superstitious adherence to a diet of vegetables, rice, and milk and water, has in many instances been thrown aside. Some indeed are still so slavishly inclined as to lament this departure from time-honoured customs, and Baboo Wooma Churn Das, of Monghyr, complains bitterly of that bibulous development which naturally marks an age of progress. I confess, however, that this spirit of freedom seems to have been carried in some instances rather too far; and I cannot but feel some doubt as to the immense advantages of this advancement, when I find that the Baboo in question has 'often found the aisle leading to the club-house (native) strewn over with human bodies more dead than alive.' But there can be no doubt the people are really progressing, and as an instance

that this progress is being extended to all classes of the community, I must just tell you about a visit paid by an independent critic to one of the Zillah schools. This gentleman visited a school containing a hundred and fifty boys, and almost the first boy he came to was reading poetry. This boy was named Bujoo Das, and an enquiry into his history showed that he was the son of a farmer, who was probably earning £40 a year. Bujoo Das was bright and intelligent, as many of these Indian boys are, though with thin legs and a large stomach. His brown finger was seen to be fast under a line, his eyes were largely dilated, and he commenced to read aloud:—

'Go, rose, my Chloe's bosom grace;
How happy should I prove,
Might I supply that envied place
With never-fading love!
There Phœnix-like, beneath her eye,
Involved in fragrance, burn and die.
Know, hapless flower, that thou shalt find
More fragrant roses there;
I see thy withering head reclined,
With envy and despair.'

Here you will at once perceive that this boy, whose father had never heard of such an exalted theme as love, will enter the world and communicate ideas to his neighbours of which they had hitherto been entirely ignorant. But the occupa-

tion of the next boy that fell under the eye of the critic will prove to you that the very lowest are not neglected, at least as far as poetry is concerned. He was described as 'a little fat child, the son of a common carpenter,' and he was conning over

> 'A pin which long had served a beauty,
> Proficient in the toilet's duty,
> Had formed her sleeve, confined her hair,
> Or given her knot a smarter air!'

When even the child of the village potter was busy with

> 'Laura's cheek—where blushes rise.'"

Here, if you remember, my dear John, I suggested that it was a pity your agents did not take a more practical view of education. On this you smiled complacently, and observed that you gave grants in aid to the mission schools, and that in these a great deal of attention was paid to practical education; "and," you continued, "if you doubt that, you have only to visit Class X. in the Indian collection at the International Exhibition, and look at the work done by the children in the mission schools, where British art carries everything before it. It is true that some impertinent *Times* reporter observed that the children had been deliberately taught to discard the exquisite patterns and harmonious colouring of their own people, and to devote themselves to imitate the most hideous

known varieties of Berlin wool work and crochet anti-macassars; but," you continued with some bitterness, "it's always the way, and the very best schemes my agents have thought of have always been turned into ridicule." To this little digression, my dear John, I listened with respectful submission, and, when you had quite done, proceeded to repeat that, however important it might be to advance the people on your Indian property, it would be a much more comfortable property in every way if it owed less and proposed to borrow no more, and that no one could contemplate with anything but feelings of uneasiness the investment of such enormous sums of British capital in such a remote and precarious property. After a long pause you said you certainly did not like the distance, and that perhaps it would be more prudent for the future not to guarantee any more interest on railway stock, and let people invest their money at their own risk. At this remark I certainly felt much cheered, and respectfully urged you to adhere firmly to that determination for the future. A long silence now ensued; you sat and reflected while I remained buried in a respectful but attentive silence. At length you spoke and said, "From all you have told me it is evident that there must be something radically wrong with the machinery employed in managing my Indian estates, and that, unless the

agency be entirely reconstructed, any treatment of what are plainly the symptoms of disease must sooner or later end in failure. Now I do not say that I will adopt your suggestions, but if you are prepared to lay before me a plan which has a reasonable chance of success, I will promise to give it my careful consideration." This was the very point I had been leading up to; so, promising that I would not bore you more than I could help, I commenced to give you the outline of a scheme of management which must lead eventually to the construction of a solid civilisation.

You will remember, my dear John, that I commenced my remarks with the enunciation of general principles, and pointed out that whenever politicians, statesmen, or by whatever name we may choose to call the governors of men, are left to follow their own devices, and are entirely uncontrolled by public opinion, they invariably prove themselves to be a very mischievous class of persons. Sometimes they are mischievous of set purpose, and to serve their own selfish ends; sometimes from ignorance; sometimes from weakness; but more often from a combination of the last two failings. Now, the assemblage of individuals who have been set in authority over the Indians for the last ten years have erred from a combination of what may be roughly estimated at about ninety

per cent. of ignorance and ten per cent. of weakness. The ignorance has shown itself most conspicuously in failing to estimate rightly the resources they had to depend on, and generally from failing to grasp simultaneously all the parts of our situation in India; the weakness in yielding (as I believe they often did against their own judgment) to the clamours of a necessarily ill-informed press, and to pressure brought to bear by those English moneyed classes who are dying to develop the resources of India, or, in other words, to find a larger market in India than they have hitherto met with. But whatever the immediate causes of failure may be is practically a matter of small importance. The governors of India, being but men, have, by the completeness of their failure, been acting in strict accordance with the laws of Nature, and, had their rule been successful, it would have been one of the most astounding circumstances that the world has ever witnessed. An attempt has been made to govern a number of peoples without in any way consulting their wishes, or attempting to ascertain their opinions. The very axioms of government have thus been violated, and the result has therefore been a fall as complete as if, with a profound contempt for all the laws of gravity, you attempted to walk on board a Thames steamer without the intervention

of the usual plank. Here you begged to interrupt me. "Why, my good man," you observed, "this sounds all very well; but there have been some very successful Governments in India, and yet the people were never represented that I ever heard of. How, for instance, do you account for Mark Cubbon having reigned for more than a quarter of a century in Mysore, and how did he happen to leave a well-roaded country, a contented people, and an overflowing treasury behind him? How did men like Malcolm, Munro, Elphinstone, and Metcalf contrive to be successful without having a parliament about them? How, to go to the old native rulers, did Runjeet Singh manage, and how did Hyder Ali maintain his supremacy? What secret of government had those men that my present agents should not govern equally well, and equally in accordance with the sentiments and wishes of the people?" The answer I gave to this was, that all these men were largely controlled by the opinion and wishes of the natives, and took very good care cautiously to feel the pulse of the populations they ruled over before venturing on any line of policy they might be doubtful on. Just look back for one moment at the court of old Hyder Ali, and what do we see? Well, we see him seated in full durbar surrounded by a number of his people, and he starts a subject on which he

wishes to have the general opinion. Cautiously concealing his own views, he allows the fullest discussion, which was always the more free as it was always doubtful to which side he might be inclined. At the end he announced his own judgment, which he never allowed to be questioned; but despot as he was, no one took more pains to ascertain the general opinion, and no doubt he was largely guided by it. If you examine the history of every successful despot, you will find the same care taken in gauging the public pulse. Look at Runjeet Singh for another instance; and if you want others, you have only to take Dost Mahomed and Mehemet Ali as examples of despots who always took good care to have people about them who could tell them the opinions of every class in their dominions. And the success of the old Indian civilians is to be traced to the same cause. They gauged more accurately than your present agents do the exact nature of our position in India. They were not chained to the desk by that mass of routine work which has caused your Indian subjects to talk of the present Raj as "the reign of paper," and thus had time for a more intimate knowledge of the peoples and countries committed to their charge than your present agents can possibly have now. The men of that day threw themselves into the exact situation of

the people they governed, and argued questions from their point of view, and in accordance with what was most likely to be popular. The men of the present day argue every question from an English point of view; and not troubling themselves at all about native opinion, remorselessly carry out measures which they will never see the danger of until it is far too late. Now, my dear John, we can't go back; the causes that formed the men of the old Indian stamp can never be reproduced. English and native societies, instead of approaching each other, are daily becoming more divergent. England is near to India, and the road is cheap and easy. The Anglo-Indian mind will therefore incline homewards more than ever, and naturally yearn after pursuits, and people, and things which are daily heard of, and which may soon be revisited. The men of the present day, again, are far too much under the influence of English opinion, or, in other words, under a fatal pressure that urges them to go ahead and develop the resources of the country; all of which being interpreted means: Spend money on cotton departments—lay down lots of rails—buy plenty of English iron, and do everything that can add to the debt charges of your Indian estates, and, as a natural consequence to the unpopularity that must be incurred in order to raise money to meet the

interest on those charges. But of all these things that fatal desk work is by far the worst, because your agents, after they have got through a long day of official writing, have neither time nor inclination to see anything of the people. It is hardly possible, my dear John, that you can imagine how the Indians feel this invisible sort of Government—this never being brought face to face with their rulers. I once lived in a province of India which was eminently non-regulation, and where the rulers had plenty of time to make themselves acquainted with the people. But a considerable change took place, and the paper régime came in. Shortly afterwards I met an old farmer, who had just returned from the annual revenue settlement. "I have been to the jummabunday," he said, "but I haven't even seen the face of the collector." If, my dear John, you could only have heard the tone in which these words were uttered, you would understand more about governing India than you can possibly do now.

Here I paused, and (after some reflection) you observed that you quite understood that your present agents could not be depended on for governing the people satisfactorily, because mainly, from a variety of causes, they had not the same opportunities of ascertaining public opinion that the men of the olden time had. "The key of the position,"

you continued, "is evidently to be found in some machinery which shall keep my agents informed as to the popular wishes; and if this machinery could be so constructed as to develop gradually into a representation of the people, it seems to me we should at last arrive at a safe and permanent government." Precisely so, my dear John; and this is just the point which has lately been engaging the attention of the very ablest of your Indian agents who are at present in this country. You have probably heard of a very able agent of yours who is now one of your Indian Council at Westminster—Bartle Frere. Well, he laid before the East India Association the other day the outline of a scheme of government which I like hugely, and which must, no doubt, be eventually adopted. Not that there are not very strong objections to its immediate adoption as a whole—that you will perceive at a glance—but a commencement may be made with the fundamental principles of his scheme any day you please. But as to his scheme. You have heard, my dear John, of the old Indian village system with its village councils. Well, in the first place it is proposed to revive these old councils, and empower them to discuss local matters and local works. In the next place it proposed that these councils should send delegates to the head-quarters of their county to form county councils; and these are in turn to send

delegates to the provincial councils. A limited number of representatives, it is suggested, might also be sent to the various legislative councils, though it is hardly thought necessary to go as far as that at present. The terms village and county councils require no explanation; but it is necessary to explain that a provincial council would represent large populations of from three to five millions. In the Bombay Presidency, for instance, it is suggested that you might have five—one for Scinde, one for Guzerat, one for the Canarese-speaking districts of the South Maharatta country, and two for the Maharatta-speaking districts (one for the table-land above the Ghauts, and the other for the Western Districts and Bombay). This is a grand scheme, my dear John; but I will not trouble you with further details regarding it; for, however perfect it may be, I cannot think, with all the will in the world, that, considering their present ignorance, the people of India can possibly fit themselves for such a system of government under a period of at least fifty years from this time. But this scheme of Bartle Frere's should be kept constantly in view, and steadily worked up to. Here is the way, or at least a way, to work up to it. You are aware that in India there are counties very similar in size to ours in England, and that these counties are divided into parishes, each parish being composed of vil-

lages more or less in number, as the case may be. To every village there is a patel, or hereditary headman. Well, from these patels I would select the best men to be found, and assemble them into a council at the head-quarters of the county, and I would have for president the chief native official of the county. A meeting of the council might be called whenever it was desirable that the opinions of the people should be ascertained on any particular subject. To this council I would communicate every sort of government intelligence, and the members would thus form a chain of intercommunication between the rulers and the ruled. The results of the deliberations of the council would of course be regurlarly reported to the English collector, and I would order that during his annual tour he should assemble the council of each county in turn, and hear what they had got to say on any particular subject. Even if they happened to have nothing particular to say, the object of making the rulers and at least some of the ruled personally acquainted with one another would be attained. This council would thus be a kind of consultative council, and in the course of time—a good many years, I am afraid —you would readily learn the sentiments and wishes of the people. It has, I am aware, been objected that any scheme of bringing natives and Englishmen together would only result in the former saying

what they thought would be palatable to the latter; and at first this would, no doubt, be the case. But it ought to be our business to remove that want of confidence which proceeds partly from a well-founded idea that our main object in India at present is to find new sources of taxation; partly from the people ignorantly misinterpreting our motives and principles, and all the ends and aims of our government. The first may be in a great measure removed by proclaiming that you are going to levy no more fresh taxes without the advice of the councils, except in the case of war. The second can only be attained by that general education of the people which must precede a scheme so advanced as Bartle Frere's. But the first of these points is really the key to the whole; for, my dear John, if the natives find that they are mainly got together, as most of your municipal councils are, to be paid the immense compliment of being urged to devise new taxes, their suspicions as to your general intentions will be strengthened rather than diminished. Clearly bearing in mind, then, that confidence can only be attained by an arrest of fresh taxation, let me now say a few words as to that educational scheme through which, and aided by your consultative councils, the people of India can alone be raised towards a solid civilisation.

And here, my dear John, let me ask at the outset

what manner of education is most needed for the inhabitants of your Indian estates, or, in other words, what, considering their present state of civilisation, are those points to which attention should first be paid? Now this question never seems to have been asked before, or, if it has, it is certain that no satisfactory answer has been given to it. Hence the potter and his poetry, and what was so well termed by an able lecturer the other day that "disqualifying education" on which your agents are squandering the funds of the people. Now, in my humble opinion, the sequence of education should be, firstly, political and material education, and, secondly, what may be spoken of as intellectual education. Anticipating that you will probably agree with me in this view, I will just remind you as briefly as possible of the scheme which I laid before you at considerable length. Again reminding you that our object is first of all to remove the political ignorance of the people, and advance their material interests at the same time, I pointed out that this could only be completely attained by having a school at the head-quarters of each county, and starting a system of compulsory education by the simple process of ordering each village, or collection of villages as might be deemed advisable, to send two boys to school throughout the year, excepting of course those periods when their services

might be required during the harvest or the most urgent field work. As to the proportion of boys to be sent to school and the times of attendance, I would leave all such details to the county council, and I would endeavour to interest them as much as possible in the work of the school. Having thus got my boys together, I would attach to the school a considerable farm, and an important part of such a farm would be a horticultural garden, in which all the most useful medicinal plants might be cultivated. The uses of these plants would of course form a branch of education, and as this knowledge would soon spread, an immense amount of good might be done. The day I would divide into two parts, one for school and the other for field work, or industrial education in whatever line might be suited to the people. The course of instruction should be as simple as possible, and if the boys were taught to read and write in the vernacular, and had a certain amount of arithmetic, it would suffice for all the rural districts. Here you begged to interrupt me for one moment just to ask what had become of the political education I had been talking about. To this I replied that I would have a regular political class for the elder boys of the school, and explain to them in especial the meaning of government enactments and regulations; and thus, my dear John, would a great deal of that ignorance which misin-

terprets your intentions be removed, and through these boys a regular chain of communication might be kept up. You see, my dear John, that in all this I am keeping steadily in view what ought always to be your main object in India, viz., the bringing of the rulers and ruled as close together as possible, to the end that they may thoroughly understand each other. Here you observed that the plan certainly sounded very plausible, "but," you continued, "I am told by many that compulsory education would never do in India." Nor would it, my dear John, with your existing machinery, for the people wouldn't understand what you were driving at; but if you once had your county councils to aid in managing the schools, and explaining matters to the people, there could be no possible objection to the scheme, while the advantages to be derived from it would be incalculable. "And how about the intellectual education?" you asked. "Am I to give up my English education, and English poetry?" To this I replied that if you look after your material and political education, you may leave all that to be paid for by the boys who desire it, and who, generally speaking, would be well able to afford it. The principal thing to attend to is the creation of a vernacular literature on useful subjects. If you encourage the best of the people to take to English, it will have the same ill effects that ensued from

the adoption of French by the upper classes in Russia. The heads of the society will end by writing in English and addressing one another, instead of writing in the vernacular and addressing the multitudes of their ignorant countrymen. But, my dear John, I have not the space, nor have you the patience, for further remarks on this subject, and the outline I have given you is quite sufficient for all practical purposes.

At this point of the conversation you said that you were now beginning to understand the alarming symptoms of fatigue and depression that are invariably to be witnessed at Westminster whenever the subject of Indian affairs happens to crop up. To this I replied that I had really intended moving off, and requesting another interview, but that I had hardly enough left to justify another conversation, and that in a very few minutes I should be able to get through every point of pressing importance. Finding that you were really going to see the last of me, you settled yourself cheerfully in your chair, and gave me leave to go on with the conversation.

I recommenced, you may remember, by observing that there is one evil under the broiling sun of India that should be at once removed, and that is the evil of what may be called departmentalism. And in explaining to you the evils of department-

alism, I shall also have an opportunity of showing you how your county councils may be made instrumental in checking the mischief that naturally ensues when each department, seeing alone its own interests and its own work, struggles to obtain the largest share of power and the longest pull possible at the public purse. Not to trouble you with minor departments, I will take that of the Public Works—a department already intolerably overbearing, and which has done more to induce financial difficulties than any other branch of the public service. You know very well that the work of this department, with its tumble-down barracks and rotten* public buildings, has long been the laughing-stock of all India, and in my last letter I gave a few instances of that harmonious incompetence it has invariably exhibited. Here I shall

* It may be worth while to point out the immediate cause of such rotten materials being put into our buildings and bridges in India. The main reason is that the engineer having charge of the distribution of the money, has a mass of office work to attend to, which prevents his making frequent inspections of works in progress. The result of this is that, in consequence of the superintendence of the execution of works being entrusted in a great measure to inferior and corrupt officials, bad lime and rotten materials are largely used. The fact is, that while the engineer is carefully guarding and accounting for the coppers, the Government loses lacs of rupees. To give an idea of the extent of this evil, I may add that I know of one engineer who, *at his own expense*, keeps a clerk to relieve him of some of the desk-work in order that he may find time to inspect thoroughly works in course of execution.

only trouble you with two instances of its blunders, with the view of showing you the importance of summarily cutting short the evil working power of this department, and reducing it to its proper position—the position of an executive servant of the State. The first case I will take from my own doors in India. Taking out of my pocket some photographs, I then, if you remember, handed one to you, and asked you to look at that. After a long look at it you said, "Well, I see nothing remarkable about it. It is evidently a photograph of a very handsome and costly iron bridge, which, if I may judge by the crowds of people about, has just been opened; and that gentleman who is standing in such a conspicuous position is probably the engineer, filled, no doubt, with a pardonable sense of importance at having bridged what must have been a very impassable river to justify such an outlay. But now I look at it again, there seem to be some curious objects in the river. Why, bless my soul," you continued, looking up with your eyes wide open, "there seems to be no water in the river, except a tiny thread in the middle of it, and now (I can't say much for your photograph, by the way) I can make out bullocks, and carts, and people, all about the bed, and some of them appear to be standing right in the middle of the river." "But perhaps during

the traffic season the river comes down?" On the contrary, my dear John; that photograph was taken in the middle of the traffic season, and through the whole of it the river is just as you see it. "But," you again suggested, "the sand is probably so deep as almost to be impassable for carts?" Anything but that, I replied, for I've ridden and driven, and seen all the heavy traffic going over that river bed without let or hindrance, for years; and during the rains, when alone it is full, all trade is suspended, and no one wants to move a cartload of food in consequence of the continuous downpour. Now, had there been a consultative council, the people would plainly have said, "Spend our money on education or irrigation if you please, but do not throw it into the hands of a Newcastle manufacturer, who will never spend a shilling of it in India."

One more instance, my dear John, and I shall have done. On the western shores of India it was once expedient to improve a harbour near the mouth of a considerable river. The engineer had his orders from Madras to execute the work in a particular way. He wrote to the head of the department, and told him that, in consequence of the silt from the river, the plan must prove a failure, and at the same time suggested another that would involve no such risk. On this he was told

that his business was to execute, and not to criticise the plans of his superiors. The western coast engineer replied that he would commence forthwith, but added that he begged to have it particularly noted that he had protested against the work. Whether this alarmed the head of the department or not I cannot say, but a superior officer was sent down to report, and the work was at once stopped. Here you see again, my dear John, that had the authority in this matter rested with the collector of the district and a consultative council, there would have been no risk of any loss of public money, for to people on the spot the objections to the Government scheme were sufficiently obvious. But the same reason for abolishing the separate existence of every department excepting the judicial stands good throughout. An engineer may be competent to make a road or build a bridge, but he is not competent to say whether the one should be made or the other built. A schoolmaster may be able to teach, but he is not competent to say what shall be taught. The forester may be able to plant and fell trees, but he is not competent to say where trees shall be planted, and where felled. All these things should be left under the control of the man who is most closely wound up with the material interests of the people, and that man is

the revenue collector, who should always have at his elbow, to guide and inform him, a consultative council selected from the ablest natives in the country. At this point of the conversation you observed that the reasoning in favour of governing the country as largely as possible in accordance with the advice of the most intelligent natives seemed to be unanswerable, "but," you continued, "I should like to know when these consultative councils are likely to expand into a real representation of the people." To this I replied that it would be impossible to fix any period, as it is impossible to tell how fast the people are likely to progress; but, as far as can be seen at present, it would be inexpedient to move one step further until the educational system proposed had produced its natural effect. But, my dear John, you need not trouble yourself about that, and as long as you feel that you are gaining the confidence of the people, and widening your educational base, the result will be sure to end well.

You now reminded me that, though in the last conversation I had called particular attention to irrigation, I had not as yet once alluded to the subject. "To the best of my recollection, you were of opinion, when I last saw you, that it would not do to borrow money to lay out on irrigation,

because, judging by the recklessness and entire want of judgment shown by the Public Works Department, it was evident that they formed no exception to the rule, that public money can only be judiciously laid out when the expenditure is under the control of the people." That was precisely my meaning, my dear John, but, if you will only take the people into your counsels, I see no reason why large irrigation works should not be constructed with borrowed money. But till you get your consultative councils set agoing, you had far better let such schemes alone. This question of irrigation is certainly a very serious and a very pressing one, when you come to consider that more than two millions and three-quarters of the inhabitants of India have been starved to death within the last ten years. In fact the question is so pressing as to justify the strongest measures with the view of saving the country from the risks of famines, which are yearly becoming more imminent in consequence of cash having taken the place of grain as a medium of exchange, and in consequence of roads and railways having facilitated the rapid change of grain into gold, which cannot be eaten, and which, from the peculiar geographical position of India, cannot be reconverted into food in times of need. In fact all your expedients for developing the resources, and add-

ing to the revenues of India, seem to tend to endanger the lives of its inhabitants; and if you will only look at the evidence given by Dr. Wilson, the missionary, before the Finance Committee, you will see that opium is occupying so much of the best land in Malwa that fears may reasonably be entertained of another famine in Rajputana. Now, my dear John, this is a very serious matter — serious alike on humane and financial grounds, and I feel that I have a right to demand your attention to the following suggestions. I need hardly tell you that the great thing with famine, as with every other danger, is to know when to expect it. Now, I am not aware that your agents have taken the smallest pains to provide any machinery which would enable them to gauge the chances in favour of a scarcity occurring in any particular district; and the natural consequence is that a famine comes and clears off a million or so of taxpayers before a hand can be held out to save them. Now, if you had your consultative councils in working order, famines ought almost to be an impossibility, or at least the effects of them might be reduced to a minimum. The county councils, being composed, mainly, of people connected with the soil, could tell you at once what stores of grain are in the country, and when the people once know the

objects of an investigation into the stocks of grain, they would only be too glad to give every information. Then, again, the councils being carefully informed as to the stocks of grain existing in all parts of India, would be enabled to give timely warning to the people as to the quantity of grain it would be advisable to store in order to insure immunity from famine. Forewarned, the people would thus be forearmed; so would your agents; and thus would an incalculable amount of misery be prevented. But though this measure of precaution would, no doubt, be very valuable, it is to the rapid extension of petty irrigation that immediate attention should be paid. And here, I conceive, very great latitude should be given to the collectors and their councils. If there is one thing more than another where arbitrary action would be justifiable, it would be in a matter of life and death like this, and, if you allowed the employment of forced labour for petty irrigation works, I think it would be one of the most useful measures that could possibly be carried out. Supposing then that the collector and his council saw that a profitable irrigation work—say in the shape of a small tank—could be executed on the lands of a village, the people of the village should be turned out *en masse* and made to do it. I doubt if such a measure would ever make your agents unpopular,

but I am quite sure that *if no increase of taxation followed from the turning of the dry land of the village into wet land*, and if the objects of the Government were explained to the people through the medium of the councils, it would be impossible to estimate the amount of popularity that would eventually be gained. Here I paused for one moment, and you took the opportunity of observing that the amount of work proposed to be effected by these councils would certainly give them plenty to do. To this I replied that they certainly would have plenty to do, and that in addition to the points already mentioned there was yet another to which their action might be usefully extended. Here you said you really must go, but on my positively assuring you that I would not detain you for more than a few moments, you said you would hear me out, and I started off again to get through the last point of importance, regarding the action of consultative councils.

I dare say you have heard, my dear John, how the Brahmins, with a masterly ingenuity which the disciples of Loyola must always have contemplated with envy, contrived by degrees to mould in their religious system the whole organism of society. In other words, they contrived to impart a religious stamp to all the habits and customs of life, and made social duties and religious

exchangeable terms. Amongst the rest they of course gathered caste into their garners, and gave a religious sanction to a number of customs which many of the natives would now discard if they dared. Now, why should not your consultative councils act after the manner of synods, at least to the extent, in the first instance, of endeavouring to modify social customs which are now unsuited to many members of the community? And here attention might be directed especially to a relaxation of the laws of caste as regards those who wished to travel, or to depart in trifling particulars from the usages of their forefathers. Popular opinion would readily find expression through the medium of the councils, and facilities be given for carrying out changes wherever it might seem desirable. And, seeing that the Hindoos have no ecclesiastical councils, in the course of time the reach of these councils would naturally and gradually extend to all religious matters whatever; but the considerations that arise at the mention of such a supposition are far too numerous for discussion here, and must therefore be left for some future occasion. Here you began to nod; so leaving you to ruminate on the numerous points we had talked over, I wended my way home, meditating on the immense confusion of mind you will be sure to fall into when you come to

mix into a general pudding the various plans which are daily being laid before you for extending the march of civilisation throughout the length and breadth of your Indian estates. I had not, however, got very far on my way when, by a singular coincidence, the same messenger that pursued me after the close of my last interview came running up to say that you wished me to come back just for one moment.

On re-entering the room I had left you in, I found you standing over an immense pile of papers. "This," you said, laying your hand on the pile with some satisfaction, "is some of the work of my Indian Finance Committee, who have lately reported that they cannot possibly get through their business this session. I have not had time to look much into it as yet, but, as far as I can see, they seem to have asked a number of questions about Salt and Stamps, and the work of the Indian mints, and opium—a drug, by the way, that I am heartily sick of. Some tell me that this information is really valuable, while others say that it will throw no light whatever on the causes of our difficulties, and that the greatest proof of the rottenness of the administration is the committee itself, or rather I should say, the fact of having, after ten years of peace and prosperity, to get together such a committee at all. I must say that

I am rather at a loss as to what to do. One thing is certain, and that is, if they ask every retired Indian what he thinks of salt and opium the committee will last for ever, and it is besides very difficult to see what new light can be thrown on these subjects." To this I replied that the committee had simply got hold of the wrong end of the stick, and that the longer they held on to it the worse it would be for every one. In fact, my dear John, they are turning their attention to tightening the hoops of the cask while the water is running out at the bung-hole. Instead of going from generals to particulars, they are attempting to work from particulars to generals. If they had commenced with the deductive argument, they must soon have discovered that, in the existing state of human nature, the condition of things in India must be thoroughly rotten, and they would therefore have turned their attention to the *fons et origo* of the evil, which lies in the thoroughly vicious form of government with which the inhabitants on your Indian estates are at present cursed. Having told you plainly that you should lose no time in remodelling your government by cutting off the reign of departmentalism, and taking the people into your counsels, they might then have gone on to details, and tried to find out where money could be saved in one particular or

another. Reverse, then, your plans; and when the committee meets next session, tell them to leave details to the last, and commence at once with an investigation into the causes that have brought your Indian estates into such serious danger. And now, my dear John, I must wish you good bye, and don't you be cast down at what I have said. Remember that "the darkest hour comes before the dawn," or, to put the case in other words, that gooseberries are always at the sourest just before they sweeten.

WANTED—A RELIGION FOR THE HINDOOS.

NOT long ago, a young and ardent missionary, taking his stand under the "pillar'd shade" of a mighty banian tree, which stands within the bounds of the village of Brahmapore, gathered round him one of those patient and languid audiences which may readily be collected when the fierce tropical sun has driven the farmer from the field, and when man, beast, and bird alike fly for shelter from the midday heat. Some of the people had heard the missionary before, and were familiar with the usual style of address; to others the tale was new, but, with characteristic tranquillity, all alike sat and listened while the biblical axe was wielded with such force as the speaker could command. He showed them that no good could come from idolatry, that it had long been denounced, and amongst civilised nations thrown aside, and that he had come amongst them to endeavour to

persuade the people to throw it aside too—to hew down the tree of idolatry, and to rear in its place the tree of life, pure and free, and with its branches stretching upwards to the sky. At last the story came to an end, and sad it is to think how many millions of such-like tales have also come to an end, and how many lives have been lost in telling them! Then followed the usual pause, which was at last broken by a Brahmin, who, addressing the missionary in English, said:

"Sir, supposing that, instead of preaching this sermon, you had been engaged in cutting down this banian tree, and that the handle of the axe you had brought from England had given way, what would you have done? You surely would not have sent all the way to England for another, but you would have cut a fresh haft from the tree itself, and so hewed down the tree through the medium of one of its branches. And so, sir, to cut down the tree of idolatry, climb up into the tree of Hindoo religion and select therefrom a limb which I will show you: small and weak it may seem indeed, but if you will only use it well, it will answer your purpose, and slowly and surely the tree will fall to the earth."

"But," urged the missionary, "I have my way appointed, and can use no other. It is not permitted that I should use anything but the Bible;

and how besides can any limb of a false religion be turned to account in fighting the battle of Christ? In your religion I can see no good thing. It is nothing but a mass of idolatry combined with cruel and debasing superstitions."

"Sir," replied the Brahmin, "in our Scriptures it is written, "As the bee gathereth honey from all flowers, so do the wise gather good from all things and all religions;" and if you will only examine our ancient books you will find mingled with the chaff, and with masses of monstrous rubbish, a pure and holy religious belief in which have existed from time immemorial truths and sentiments as exalted as any that are to be found in any religion in the world."

"Ah! my friend," said the missionary, "I see you are one of the new school we have heard so much of lately—the Brahmo Somaj."

"True, sir, I am; but though it is now heard of more than ever it was before, that school has existed in India from the remotest times, and it was amongst its members that the highest religious development of the Hindoo found expression. They knew of, and believed in, the One True God, and thousands of years ago they wrote that 'God is of infinite power, the Ruler of the universe; that God is the gift of charity, the offering, the fire of the altar; that by God the sacrifice is performed;

and that God is to be obtained by him who makes God alone the object of his works.'"

"My friend," replied the missionary, "if what you assert is really the case, how is it that the pure Theism which the best of your ancestors believed was confined to them, and did not gradually spread through the length and breadth of the land?"

"The answer to that, sir, is extremely simple. The minds of my ancestors being advanced and strengthened by study and reflection, felt able to stand alone without any go-between or barrier between them and God. But they knew well that, to the uneducated and undeveloped mind, the leap from man to God direct is too great, and that the demand for some mediator or inferior deity, who is near to man and yet within close reach of God, must be supplied in some way or other. And that this was really their view may be seen from the following passage from one of our ancient books, which says: 'Those who worship the Indivisible, Unmanifested, Omnipresent, are esteemed the most devoted; but the labour of directing thought to an object without manifest form is great, and with difficulty attained by mortals, and worship is recommended under the manifested form.' But, sir, if you will only look round the world, you will find that no religion can become popular without some

intermediate personage or deity; and hence we see Bhuddha between God and the Bhuddhists, Christ between God and the Christians, Mahommed between God and the Mahommedans. But to many minds one go-between is not sufficient. Hence the worship of the Virgin Mary, and the homage paid to numerous saints. Hence the visits to various shrines paid by the Indian Mahommedans. Now my ancestors, as I said before, plainly recognised this, and hence what is called the Brahminical religion, which has lasted so long, but which is now perceptibly crumbling away before Western civilisation and knowledge. And the worst of it is, sir, that nothing is rising in its place. As for us, the higher and educated Hindoos, the Brahmo Somaj is sufficient; but the masses are plainly in want of, and must have, some religion with a mediator or go-between; and it would, indeed, be a great and mighty work to furnish them with some useful creed. As far as I can see, they had far better take their choice between Bhuddhism and Christianity, which are certainly the two best religions in the world, and which, from their having both got on so well, must contain principles suitable to the general wants of the bulk of the human race. I confess that I should consider it a matter of indifference which of the two they adopted, as they resemble each other

in such an extraordinary degree; but as no Bhuddhist countries seem willing to pay for converting my countrymen, we are necessarily thrown back on Christianity alone; and if that religion were only put before the people in a proper form, I see no reason why it should not be ultimately adopted."

Here a slight pause took place. The day, however, was advancing, and the Brahmin, wishing to depart for his midday meal, and being apparently tired of the discussion, made the customary parting salutation. But, before he had left the crowd, the missionary said:

"My friend, you seem to have taken a great deal of interest in religious matters, and I should like to have another conversation with you on the subject."

"Sir," answered the Brahmin, "I shall be very happy to call on you, but if I do so, I am sure you will suffer me to talk with freedom about your missions and your religion. I confess that I seldom like to do so with your countrymen, who have seldom enough imagination to enter into our position. Let me tell you a story which I have laid much to heart. A friend of mine, when travelling in one of the coasting steamers, fell into conversation with an Englishman regarding religion. The Englishman attacked the Hindoo religion without

scruple, and wondered how people of education and intelligence could find any good in it. My friend, who, I forgot to tell you, is an orthodox Hindoo, waited until he had quite done, and then commenced to make some observations on the Englishman's belief. He naturally began with the Old Testament, and pointed out that the story of the creation of the world certainly eclipsed the most monstrous Hindoo legends, and that if the charge of indecency could be brought against them, there were a good many stories in the Old Testament of a kind which showed that that volume had no great pretensions to purity. Turning next to the New Testament, and alluding to the fact that Christ was repeatedly said to be the Son of God, he drew some conclusions which, though natural enough, I will not shock your ears by repeating. My friend was then just about to point out what seemed to him some further defects in the story of the origin of the Christian religion, when the Englishman said, 'You have grossly insulted my religion, and I'll not hear another word. I cannot bring myself to say what you deserve for having spoken thus.' To this my friend answered: 'Sir, when you abused and turned into ridicule the whole of my religion, I sat quiet, and, whatever I may have felt, showed no sign of anger; but when I commence to pick holes

in yours, you look as if you would like to throw me overboard.'"

The Brahmin then went his way, while the missionary, betaking himself to his tent, sat down and meditated much and wearily on the difficulties of the life he had entered on.

On the morning following the Brahmin repaired to the tent of the missionary, and after the usual salutations the conversation was commenced by the Indian, who spoke thus:—

"Sir, before we begin to talk about the religion that my countrymen are in want of, I will, if you will allow me, give you a short account of my life, to let you see how it came to pass that I had such good opportunities of making myself acquainted with your mission system, and how the interest in religion shown by your people gradually absorbed so much of my attention. My father who died some years ago, was a poor Brahmin who gained a scanty subsistence by letting a few fields which the family had held for generations. But though poor, he had always a taste for learning, and was, comparatively speaking, well versed in those Sanskrit books which are usually studied by the most advanced of my countrymen. His anxiety for learning naturally extended itself to his family, and as a wealthy relation who lived in Calcutta offered to take me in, I accordingly repaired to

that city and studied hard at one of the missionary schools of the Scotch Church. Shortly after this I made the acquaintance of a gentleman you must often have heard of—Dr. Ogilvie, who spent more than twenty-five years in mission work, and who, you may probably have heard, preferred to remain in India and die at his post, though he had to carry out that educational missionary system against which his life was one long protest. The good Doctor, I am informed, and I quite believe it, would not go home to his country because he would have been expected to hold forth on missionary platforms, and because he felt that he must speak the truth, and that truths which condemned the whole Indian mission system would have been in the last degree unpalatable to the Church he represented. But however all that may be, the good Doctor, I must tell you, took a fancy to me, and I took an equal fancy to him. This led to my being a frequent visitor at his house, and to many conversations on mission work and the various religions professed in various quarters of the globe. Of books of course he had all those which could throw light on such subjects, and these he freely lent me, and I as freely devoured their contents. The taste I thus acquired for religious questions has never since deserted me, and hence it is that I have probably a better acquaintance with mission

work than many of the missionaries themselves. And sir, I have this advantage over them, namely, that being bound to a body which has so little of the spirit of sectarianism about it, I can look on various creeds with a calm and unprejudiced eye, and can therefore bring my observation to bear quite impartially as to the best methods of advancing any particular faith. The religious condition of my countrymen, which is more unfortunate than that of any civilised or partially civilised nation in the world, has naturally excited my deepest interest, and I flatter myself that I can give you some hints which will materially aid the progress of Christianity in India. But, alas! sir, how can I hope that any of your Church will listen for one moment to the thoughts of a deistical Brahmin?"

"My friend," said the missionary, "as for myself, I love to hear criticism from whatever quarter it comes; nor have I the slightest dread of it."

"Your Church, sir," said the Brahmin, "is fond of likening itself to an army fighting for the cause of Christ, and going forth to conquer all nations to the end that they may be gathered into one fold, and worship one God. Now, supposing we accept this description, and, considering your Church in the light of an army, regard its operations with a calm and unprejudiced eye. At the very first

glance two glaring errors stand prominently forth. The first of these is that in many instances your people have selected the wrong races to commence with; the second is that they have pitched upon the worst possible places for carrying on the operations of their proselytising army to a successful issue. And, sir, though this must be sufficiently apparent to the most ordinary observer, it is with satisfaction that I am able to refer you to a book* written by one of your missionaries, which is solely taken up with exposing the deficiencies of your mission system. The fact is that everything connected with your missions is a blunder, and the only successful part of the undertaking consists of the skill with which such enormous sums are extracted from the good people of England. But there are very strong indications that the people of England are opening their eyes to the fact that their money is being injudiciously expended, and, as regards your Scotch missions, I may just point to the significant fact that the subscriptions to the India missions of the Established Church have, within the last three years, fallen off to the extent of £600 a year. The General Assembly profess themselves at a loss to account for this. It can, according to them, "be accounted for only by an

* *Christian Missions.* By A. C. Geekie, D.D. London: James Nisbet & Co.

alarming indifference to the cause of Christ, or by a want of serious and prayerful consideration; or by a strange ignorance regarding the work; or by misleading statements made by partisans or by persons very partially informed about it; or, above all, by the refusal on the part of the Kirk session to substitute subscriptions, however small, yet regularly made, for an annual subscription at the church door.' Now, sir, let me tell you that none of these surmises are correct. The plain truth is that few Scotch families are without some member in India, and thus are therefore very well acquainted with the fact that the existing educational system can never do any good in the way of supplying my countrymen with a new religion, and that the line that has been taken, as far as regards our caste institutions, at once puts an end to all chance of success."

Here the missionary begged to interrupt the Brahmin for one moment.

"My friend," said the missionary, "would it not be better to introduce a little more order into the discussion? If you have no objection, I should like to examine the following points successively.

"First of all, I should like to hear what are the races and places against which we ought to march our missionary army.

"II. I should like to know what you think of

the way in which the societies are managed in England.

"III. I should like to hear in detail your reasons against continuing our present educational system in India.

"IV. I should like to hear how, in your opinion, Christianity can possibly accommodate itself to your caste system, which at present seems to stand like an insurmountable wall between you and the religion of Christ."

"Sir," replied the Brahmin, "I am much obliged to you for having pointed out such a convenient order of discussion, and if you ever find me straying unwarrantably from the point, pray interrupt me without scruple. To commence, then, let me ask what are those races and places first deserving of attention?

"And first of all, as to the places.

"A person like myself, taking an outside view of the matter, would be disposed to imagine that the principal object in view was to rival those religious devotees who do penance by bodily torture, or by rolling over and over all the way from Delhi to Benares. Let us commence with Western Africa, and see how your missionaries got on there. The Scotch Missionary Society fitted out an expedition in 1797, and set to work in the Susoo country, but in four years the work came to an

end. One of the missionaries was murdered, and the climate all but killed the remainder. Passing over the failure of the Glasgow Society in the same quarter, let us see how the Church Missionary Society fared in the same Susoo country, where they started a mission early in this century. This, like the others, came of course to an end, but not until thirty men, women, and children had died of disease. The Society at home seems certainly to have been much cheered at this result, and after a delay of five years commenced a fresh course of human sacrifices by sending out an expedition to Sierra Leone. This expedition started in 1823, and twenty-five of the mission perished within four or five years. The news of these sacrifices seems to have excited feelings of jealousy amongst the Reformed Churches in Germany, and in 1827-28, I find that eight German missionaries were despatched to this region. Four of these died within a few months, two fled just in time to save their lives, while four others, sent to Fort Christianburgh in 1828, all died soon after landing. This seemed to be so satisfactory that three more victims were sent out in 1831. Of these two died almost immediately, but this loss was subsequently repaired by two others, who perished long before they could learn the language of the country. As for his sole survivor, I can find no account as to

what became of him, so I conclude he perished like the rest. After the Scotch mission got tired of Africa, or perhaps because no fresh devotees would come forward, it betook itself to the regions between the Black Sea and the Caspian, and set up in a village called Karass, where the inhabitants are all Mahommedans. The country, in this instance, was more salubrious, but what it wanted in unhealthiness was made up by the inaccessibility and general unsuitability of the situation. Subsequently the Society sought out the Tartars of Astrakhan, but as little impression seems to have been made on them as on the Mahommedans, and the result was that after twenty years of incessant labour the whole scheme had to be abandoned. In fact, of these expeditions nothing whatever seems to have remained, except a few translations of the Bible. After the Scotch mission had abandoned this field, the Germans, it may be mentioned, took up the task of converting the natives, and after fourteen years' hard work were dismissed by the authorities. But, after all the experience of the past, the most inaccessible regions of Africa seemed still to be as charming as ever, and I feel sure you will excuse my reminding you of Bishop Mackenzie's twenty thousand pound expedition into the heart, as it were, of the unknown land. The Bishop, if you remember, started with five or

six clergymen, one physician, one surgeon, and a few mechanics and labourers. The Bishop was duly consecrated at Cape Town, and commissioned for the tribes dwelling in the neighbourhood of the River Shire and Lake Nyassa. These devotees—fortunate or unfortunate, as you may choose to call them—struggled into the interior, and established themselves in a locality where disease and death soon overtook them. The Bishop died, so did Scudamore and Dickinson; as to what became of the others, it is hardly worth while to enquire. Another famous attempt is that of Captain Allen Gardiner's expedition to Tierra del Fuego, an island which lies off Patagonia. After two unsuccessful expeditions to that country, he returned to it in 1850, with six other devotees. It seems that they seldom saw the natives, and that when they did see them they got out of their way as fast as possible. But the usual result soon came to their relief. Some died, and the rest fled. In 1852 the frigate *Dido* visited Spaniard Island, and found the body of Captain Gardiner lying beside his boat, and that of Mr. Maidment in a cave." Here the Brahmin paused for one moment, and the missionary thereupon observed:

"My friend, I am afraid I must admit that the folly shown by missionary societies has indeed been great, and I can even add one instance more

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extraordinary than any you have mentioned. You have probably heard of Greenland with its scanty blubber-eating population, and its dreary leagues of ice and snow. Well, for the space of one hundred and fifty years many (who shall say, indeed, how many?) noble Danish men and women spent their lives in trying to Christianize the people; and after all that work, it could only be shown that some one thousand nine hundred nominal Christians existed in West Greenland in 1852. And when one comes to look at the efforts made in Lapland and Labrador, the result is as little satisfactory; and besides, these places are the road to nowhere, and can never be of any use in enlightening the world."

At this remark the Brahmin smiled with satisfaction, and said, "Sir, I see very plainly from what you have just said, that we shall probably agree on many points—at least until we come to discuss the attempts of your missionaries in India. It is plain that you entirely agree with me in the censures I have passed on your people for starting their missionary forces into such remote and inhospitable fields, and in thinking also that it would be far better to concentrate your efforts on certain central points, so that the truth should radiate on all sides. So much, then, we may consider as settled; but there are other considerations be-

sides, which I wish to press upon your attention. Hitherto I have alluded only to the places you have commenced on; let me now say something as to the races of men on whom you have wasted so much of your efforts.

"You are aware, sir, that the tendency shown by certain races to die out cannot be disputed. We see them melting away and actually decaying within the short period of a moderate life.

"I will remind you, as briefly as possible, of the various facts which seem to show that your people have not only spent their money in the wrong regions, considering their geographical position, but have spent it on races that will certainly die out. And amongst the instances let me first select a few from North America. Look, then, at the sad tales told in Dr. Geekie's interesting book—sadder tales, indeed, of misplaced labour than I have ever heard of. You will read there how John Eliot, well named 'the Indian Evangelist,' toiled for forty-four years amongst the Natick Indians, and after all his labours what remains? Simply nothing but their Bible, and a few books written in their now extinct dialect. In 1797 only twenty of pure blood existed, while in 1836 one wretched wigwam containing three or four people, half Indian, half Negro, contained the last fragment of the tribe, which is now quite

extinct. Then look at the lives and labours of Mayhew, Richard Bourne, John Sargeant, and David Brainerd. How these men toiled, and suffered, and died for tribes, many of which have entirely disappeared, while others are only represented by some wretched remnant lingering on in some far-off region of the vast continent! It is true that many causes—wars, disease, and vice—hastened the extinction of the tribes these noble men laboured for; but if you will turn to Canada, you will see that this wasting away cannot be arrested by any influences your people can possibly bring to bear. 'In Canada,' says Dr. Geekie, 'for the last fifty years, the Indian has been treated with paternal kindness, but the wasting never stops. . . . . The Government has built them houses, furnished them with ploughs, supplied them constantly with rifles, ammunition, and clothing, paid their medical attendants, supported their schools, and provided for their religious instruction, setting over them intelligent and high-minded superintendents; but the result is merely this, that their extinction goes on more slowly than it otherwise would.' Many instances are given from the same region, and the steady decrease of the Indians on the St. Clair, who were located on a reserve of land which supplied every condition that Indian life could need, shows that

there are inherent springs of decay at work, which baffle every effort that can be made towards arresting them. In the reserve in question, the Indians were no drunkards, they were honest in their way; their squaws were as virtuous, or rather more so, perhaps, than usual; and yet they are dying out. The cause of decline has been attributed to a deadening feeling of apathy and inferiority, in consequence of coming in contact with superior races. This, I admit, may no doubt accelerate the decay, but how can it create the causes of decay? and how is it that the white man in India comes in contact with tribes far inferior to the Red Indian and the New Zealander, and yet does not arrest the natural increase of the people? Is it that the Red Indian and the New Zealander are more sensitive? We must for the present admit the existence of certain causes which baffle our penetration, and which bring about the decay of some races as certainly as the permanence of others. And here, sir, let me offer you an apology for trying your patience a little longer, while I turn your attention to the people of the Southern Seas.

"Let me first call your attention to New Holland, where the natives are anything but stupid. In fact, some have asserted them to be both quick, penetrating, and clever; but with all this an able

observer (Judge Therry) said, that the 'problem has yet to be solved of bringing even a single aboriginal within the pale of civilisation.'* You may catch them young, take them even to England, as was Beneloug, a native chief, and yet on the first opportunity that occurs away they go to a wandering and decaying life. The chief alluded to was so far advanced as to be invited to the table of the governor; but one day he threw off his gentleman's garb, and, opossum rug on shoulder, and spear in hand, left a comfortable home for the bush. How many New Hollanders are left is not exactly known, but the Tasmanian blacks are almost, if not entirely, gone. In New South Wales and Victoria but a mere handful remains, and in other parts of Australia they are everywhere diminishing, and in two or three generations will probably be extinct. And if you cross over to New Zealand, you will find the same thing going on; and here the case is so extraordinary, as to be worth some more detailed notice. The New Hollander, and many of those tribes who are now fast withering away, are weak and feeble people, and wholly wanting in energy and vigour. To this might be attributed in part their decadence. But what are we to say of the Maori? He is the noblest of savages, not equalled by the best

* Vide Dr. Geekie's work, p. 23.

of the Red Indians. He excels alike in size, strength, and courage, while his intellect has been pronounced to be both acute and vigorous. Wars, indeed, he has had with the white man, but the loss of life in battle was a mere trifle. There are no adequate causes to account for his rapid decline, and yet, counting from 1848, the Maoris have decreased from about 100,000 to 38,500, or, in other words, 61 per cent. of the people have vanished in twenty years. No one, too, knows the approaching end more surely than the Maori himself. At a grand conference held in 1868, Mr. Parris, civil commissioner at Taranaki, expressed the pleasure he felt at finding they had all come so peacefully together. Sad and hopeless was the answer, and it was shortly this: 'You have our land, the white man is surely winning our land from us; and when the time comes that the country is fully peopled, and men must needs go forth again, as the Pakehas have already done from their England, there will be no Maoris to go forth, for all shall have disappeared.' And what, sir, let me ask you, is the use of carrying your religion to a people like this? for even if you do convert them, they, instead of breeding more Christians to swell the numbers and add to the influence of the faith, will simply expire, religion and all. But, independently of this consideration,

what have been the results of your proselytizing efforts amongst the New Zealanders? You plastered them all over with your Christianity, or such Christianity as they were capable of, and we are told, on the authority of one of your own missionaries, that 'nowhere else, amongst savage races, has Christianity been more fully declared or more fully accepted.' But, as a Christian, the Maori has been a complete failure in every respect, and he has now in a great measure thrown aside the nominal hold that Christianity had on him, and prefers before it a debasing superstition. Let me now, sir, pass on to remark, as briefly as possible, on some of your many missions to the islands of the Southern Seas. Let us glance at the New Hebrides group. The climate there is described as debilitating to Europeans, and even the natives are much subject to fever and ague; and there, as one of the missionaries says, the curse of Babel seems to have fallen heavily on the group, and on each of the six islands on which your people are labouring, a separate translation of the Scriptures is needed. And for what is all this labour? Alas! sir, it is labour in vain, and we have the usual tale of the people dying out. When, too, we turn to the Loyalty Island, we have the same weary story—a great deal done, but no hope of any permanent good arising from the laborious efforts

of the missionaries. And then, sir, look at your Feejean Christianity. The Wesleyans are labouring hard in this group of islands, and in 1868 had no less than twelve European and forty-five native missionaries at work, to say nothing of a large body of catechists, class-leaders, and local preachers. Some good has, I freely admit, been effected; the revolting custom of cannibalism has been abandoned, so have human sacrifices, and a disinterested witness who attended the native services was deeply impressed with the extent to which divine truth had taken hold of the people. But the reports of the missionaries themselves are far from encouraging, and tell us that the people are well contented with merely the outward form of Christianity. Then we come to the usual tale of decay, and all men agree that the Feejeans are rapidly disappearing. One of the Wesleyan missionaries, speaking of the island of Rotumah, says: 'It will be a cause of sorrow to all who take an interest in this island to know that the population, already under three thousand, is still steadily on the decrease.' The Hervey Islands, Tahiti, and the Friendly Islands, the Sandwich and Marquesas, all tell the tale of the rapid extinction of the Polynesian races. Samoa alone shows a small increase, and Dr. Turner gives it as his opinion, in which Mr. Nesbit, another mis-

sionary of long experience, agrees, that the people there, 'if left alone and *not colonised*, would, under the influence of Christianity, multiply and be permanent.' But they *are* being colonised, and I fear that their fate must surely be like that of the rest. Now, sir, let me ask what you have to say to all this. Let me again remind you that you have repeatedly likened your Church to an army fighting for the cause of Christ. How, then, do these missionary expeditions to remote islands and expiring races advance his cause? If your army were one for earthly purposes, and launched its forces amidst disease and death for the purpose of conquering scanty and worthless races, what would its leaders deserve? What would those who sent it forth? These, sir, are questions worth pondering."

"My friend," answered the missionary, "they are indeed worth pondering, and the only thing that can be said in palliation of these abortive proselytizing efforts is that our people have interpreted the command to preach the gospel to all nations at once, instead of following as closely as possible the plans that were pursued in the earliest days of the Church."

"That, sir," answered the Brahmin, "is just the point I was working up to, with the view of asking you why your people thought fit to depart from

those plans which were adopted by the Apostles and those who came immediately after them. Look at the geographical position of the Founder of your religion. There is no spot in the whole world that could have been more admirably chosen with the view of spreading a religion over the Asiatic and European continent, and thence over the whole world. The plan adopted is evidently the natural one of radiation from the most civilised centres. Paul and the Apostles did not scatter themselves about amongst remote islands and decaying races. We find Paul, for instance, in Jerusalem and in Asia Minor, and after that we do not find him setting off for the Caucasian wilds or the deserts of Arabia, but he betook himself to Greece, and made the best use of his time and abilities in such places as Corinth, Thessalonica, and Athens. At last we find him at Rome, preaching in the very centre of European life. And so it was with the other Apostles. We do not find a single instance of their skipping over permanent nations, and civilised or partially civilised races, to carry the Word of God to decaying and barbarous tribes. Your Christianity never got as far as Britain till the second century, and some of the northern European nations did not receive the religion of Christ until the ninth. We find it thus working forward from one country to the next beyond in

a natural order of succession. Now, I have often talked to your missionaries about all this. Some have yielded to the force of my reasoning, but others are obstinate, and when I urge that missions should be removed from the Polynesian, and planted more thickly amongst the Indo-Aryans and Chinese peoples, tell me that the soul of a Feejean is just as much worthy of care, and is of just as much consequence in the sight of God, as the soul of the most learned Brahmin in India. When I assent to this they then say, 'Then there is an end of the argument.' But, sir, because I admit that the soul of a Feejean is of as much consequence to its possessor and to God as my soul can ever be, the argument is by no means ended. Those who urge that the soul of a Feejean is of as much importance as the soul of a Brahmin must also admit that the soul of a Brahmin is of as much consequence as the soul of a Feejean. That being granted, and it being also granted that you cannot afford to carry your religion effectually to both at once, you have then only to enquire into the geographical position and the permanence of type of the Polynesian and Indo-Aryan races. If you find that the Feejean is one of a race that is rapidly disappearing, and that his geographical position is such that he can never be an effective agent for the propagation of your faith—if, sir,

these points are proved, as they clearly have been, and if it can also be shown that your Brahmin occupies an admirable geographical position, and is of a race which is undoubtedly permanent and increasing, how can there be any doubt as to giving him the preference? Look for one moment at the map of Asia, and observe the situation of India. It touches Burmah on the east, and Thibet on the north, while Afghanistan and Persia lie to the north and north-west. If, then, you carried your religious war effectively throughout India, can there be any doubt that you would thus have turned the key of the position in Asia?"

"My friend," observed the missionary, "whatever may be the opinions of my countrymen in general, I for one freely admit the cogency of your reasoning both as regards the places and races that should have the preference, and it requires but a very small exercise of common sense to see that we should advance regularly from the most central situation of the world to its extremities, and, commencing with the most permanent types of mankind, advance gradually towards Christianizing those who are doomed to extinction. These points, then, we may consider as settled, and I think we may now advance to a consideration of the second point I should like to hear your opinion on—I mean the machinery used in working our missionary

army. This machinery appears to us, no doubt, to be satisfactory enough; but the results hitherto arrived at seem to show that we should anxiously look for criticism from people like yourself, in order that our system may be surveyed from every point of view, and I shall therefore be glad to listen to all your views on this branch of the subject."

Hereupon the Brahmin spoke as follows:—

"Sir, what I have now to say to you has often been a subject of discussion amongst my people, who, the more they consider the matter, are the more surprised that a nation so practical in business, and so skilled in the matters of trade, should exhibit such feebleness in the management of missionary affairs. Whatever it may seem to you, it certainly seems the height of madness that people who are advocating the cause of Christ should come here ready to fly at one another's throats, and each one endeavouring to persuade us that he only holds the right method of interpreting Christianity. The Roman Catholic missionary tells me that he alone holds the keys of heaven; that his faith came down in one uninterrupted line of apostolic succession, and that all other professors of Christianity are but false prophets. While, however, the mind is pondering on the advantages of such a belief, presently there comes a man who is also engaged

in spreading the religion of Christ. This man calls himself a Protestant, and, as far as I can understand matters, he seems to bear the same relation to Roman Catholicity that Bhuddhism bears to Brahminism. When I tell him of the comfortable interpretation of Christianity which I have just heard of, he tells me of the gorgeous idolatry of Rome, and how, in the course of time, it was superimposed on the noble and simple teaching of Christ. He speaks to me of the aims of an ambitious priesthood, and of a Church whose history tells many a tale of bloody persecutions and shameless impositions. He tells me how the human mind at length revolted, and, shaking off the chains that had fettered the best of European peoples, proclaimed its freedom from those degrading superstitions which are so admirably adapted for serving the selfish ends of those who, in the name of Christ, had endeavoured to maintain a lasting supremacy. I listen to all this, and to me there seems to be nothing strange or unintelligible in the matter; for I can go back many a century ago when exactly the same thing took place in India. In these far-off ages I can see, and, it seems to me, even hear, the pure hymns of the most ancient Vedic days; and I can also see the subtlety of the priests gradually building up an enslaving religious system. I can see them adding stone to stone, adding religious

duty to religious duty, and exalting their order as the sole interpreters between man and his God. I can see them weaving the web closer and closer with an ingenuity far exceeding that of the most acute doctors of the Romish Church. I can see them giving a religious sanction, and claiming a direct heavenly ordinance for law, for manners, and for customs, till they had wound every part of life so closely together that religious and social duties became synonymous terms. But, sir, they went too far, and, as in Europe, the day came when the last hair broke the back of the camel. Then arose that revolt of the mind which took the shape, and called itself by the name of Bhuddhism. That, sir, was our Indian Reformation, when the pretensions of an ambitious priesthood were scattered to the winds, and the mind for many centuries afterwards shook off the deadly poison of a superstition which falsely claimed to come direct from God. And so, looking back on our Churches, and our Reformation, I can see nothing unnatural, or I should rather say that I could have anticipated with certainty, that something of the kind must have come to pass in the history of Christianity. But, though these things are plain and intelligible to me, they are not so to the masses of my ignorant countrymen. With them, sir, the trumpet of Christ must give forth no uncertain sound, and if you ever hope for

one gleam of success in India, you Christians must either settle your differences at home, or draw lots for possession of the field."

"Alas! my friend," replied the missionary, "would that it were possible to do the first, or that even such a sensible plan as that of dividing the field between the various proselytizing sects, so that none might clash with each other—would even that that were possible! But neither of your suggestions can ever come to pass. The Roman Catholics and Protestants would never yield one inch of ground; nor amongst the Protestants themselves is it likely that Presbyterians, Wesleyans, Baptists, and the numerous subdivisions of Protestantism, would forego the attempt to reproduce and extend the paltry differences that exist between them."

"Sir," answered the Brahmin, "if that be indeed the case, you must give up all hopes of making any progress in India until the day arrives (and it is far from improbable that it may not be so very far distant) when the people seek out Christianity for themselves, and adopt whatever form of it is most suited to their social condition; for how can you expect the people to make up their minds about your religion while such differences of opinion exist amongst the numerous sects of Christians? But there is no use in my saying more on this head, and

it will be more to the purpose if I remark briefly on another grand defect which stands out so glaringly when one comes to examine your Protestant mission system. I allude to the class of persons who call themselves the managers of missionary societies, and to the fact of such societies being allowed to exist at all. They are amenable to no ecclesiastical jurisdiction; they are unheard of in your Scriptures; and yet they actually perform duties, and exercise powers, which should be entrusted to the ablest heads of the Church. In fact, as far as I can understand matters, any number of people in England may meet together, and send out a clergyman, if one can be found to go, to any part of the world. Now, sir, this is all wrong, and mainly because your managers of missionary societies are men of small brains and quite unfit to be entrusted with the charge of money to be spent in proselytizing purposes. You know very well, sir, that the majority, or I may even say all but a very small minority, of my countrymen look upon the English as a set of beings whose principles of action it is impossible to discover. Hence, the curiosity evinced as regards you, and that minuteness of observation that is brought to bear on Englishmen in general; since no one is able to forecast what you are going to do next. And that extraordinary eccentricity of action which characterizes you as individuals seems to

pursue you in every walk of Indian life and every branch of Indian affairs. Without asking the road from any man, you pursue your own eccentric course without reference to any principle of action we can possibly discover, and rush on regardless of consequences, accumulating debt upon debt and responsibility upon responsibility, shutting your eyes resolutely to the dangers that surround you, and building up laws and departments as rotten as your public buildings and barracks. It would indeed have been extraordinary if your missionary efforts had formed an exception to the general rule. But from any and every point of view they have eclipsed all the other attempts of your countrymen in the matter of Indian government, and such a method of starting a new religion was probably never heard of. How, let me ask you, was the religion which has the greatest number of adherents in the world —how was the religion of Bhuddha started? How was your own religion taught? Did Bhuddha and his disciples set up schools, and teach what your people call the three R's? Did Christ and his disciples do anything of the sort? Did the apostles or those who came after them? Did any people but yourselves ever start the insane idea of setting up ordinary schools with the view of inculcating the doctrines of their religion? Have any people, by way of spreading a living faith, ever commenced

by sinking the noble character of the missionary in the humdrum work of the school-room?"

"My friend," said the missionary, "you grow warm, and, you will excuse me hinting, somewhat unduly so. Not that I have any wish to check your freedom of speech, but I should like to remind you that a quiet and patient discussion is far more likely to lead to a profitable result; and if you will only wait a moment, I think I can show you that there was some method in the madness of my people when they set up these schools you deride so bitterly. Our missionaries, when they came to India, very soon found that, from the want of education, it was impossible to form a body of native pastors, and the object they had in view when they created educational establishments was to provide a supply of native ministers to aid them in preaching and declaring the Word of God."

"Sir," answered the Brahmin, "I am perfectly aware of the original object of these schools, and I do not doubt that the primary object of the system was, if not a very wise one, at least fairly excusable; but you surely must know that this scholastic experiment has had a long, full, and fair trial, and that it has broken down in every respect; for it has as entirely failed to produce native missionaries as it has failed to produce converts. And as a proof that it has done so you have only to look

at the results of Dr. Duff's missionary schools. Hew as, and is still, I believe, a man of vigour and fair ability, and was aided by a staff of missionaries who have been pronounced to be men of parts and learning. Connected with his school system there were, some years ago, no less than fifty-one Christian agents, including four ordained European missionaries; and the average attendance of scholars was upwards of three thousand. Then there were two native evangelists, as they are described in Dr. Norman Macleod's 'Address on Indian Missions,' and five agents engaged in itinerary preaching. Dr. Duff worked away at the head of this system for upwards of thirty years, and yet since the commencement of the mission only two hundred and six converts have been made; and as for ordained native missionaries, only three had been contributed by the institution at the time Dr. Macleod wrote. The primary object of these schools has thus been a complete failure, and as to the secondary object—the production of converts—the result seems anything but satisfactory. Dr. Ogilvie, I may add, spent fifteen consecutive years without making a single convert, and others have spent much longer periods without advancing their religion by the conversion of a single person. But, sir, these schools actually stand in the way of conversions, and far more

converts are made amongst those who have been educated at the Government colleges. Nor have we very far to go for an explanation of this. Before I went to a missionary school I was particularly cautioned against Christianity as a system that would end in making me an outcast if I imbibed any of the forms of it as taught by the missionaries. Then I was filled with nauseous doses of Bible reading and Scripture exposition, which I used to swallow with the best possible grace in order that the missionary might take an interest in me, and so take more care of my secular education. Now, the natural result of all this is that the mind is prejudiced against Christianity, and hence I am not at all surprised to find that more conversions are made from those educated at the Government schools, as their minds come to the subject quite fresh and unprejudiced. But, sir, I need not trouble you with further proofs on this head, for the whole missionary work in India shows that schools do not lead to conversions, and, as it is equally plain that the Government schools provide a sufficient number of educated men to Christianize all India, it follows that the sooner the missionary school-houses are sold off the better. If, however, the good people of England still wish to pay for our education, I can see no reason why we should not take the money and be

thankful, as it just saves us so much taxation; but if they will take my advice, they will leave out all the Scripture reading and exposition, as it only bores the pupils, and, as I said before, makes Christian doctrines more distasteful than they would otherwise be."

"My friend," said the missionary, "I confess that I have often had some doubts about the advantages of our school system, and a considerable number of those in England who take an interest in missions are beginning to think that it is a mistake. This feeling is daily growing stronger, and the facts you have just brought forward will no doubt have some influence on the matter. In any case, I think that every missionary society should set to work and enquire whether it is true, as you assert, that schools, so far from advancing have a tendency to retard the spread of Christianity. But, my friend, time is wearing on, and I have many miles to travel before nightfall; so, if you have no objection, I should like to hear now whether, in your opinion, Christianity can ever be made to fit in with your caste customs. You know that we have decided that it cannot, and hence that tremendous wall which seems destined to remain an impassable barrier between your people and the religion of Christ."

"Sir," continued the Brahmin, "your people in

India are fond of nothing so much as making difficulties, and then setting to work to solve them. Caste, it is perfectly true, does stand as an impassable barrier between us and Christianity. But who, let me ask you, made it a barrier? Would Christ and his disciples have made it a barrier? Did Schwartz and the ablest German missionaries make it a barrier? Did the great and good Bishop Heber? Did the railway companies make it into a barrier between them and the system of travelling they wished to introduce?"

"My friend," observed the missionary, "what can the railway companies have to do with our present subject?"

"Well, sir, they have just this much to do with it, namely—that they have set you an example, and proved how much may be done by letting things alone, and leaving them to settle themselves. When railways were first started, every one said that they would never answer, because caste prejudice would prevent the people from travelling together. How is it possible, it was often asked, that a Brahmin who would be defiled by coming within arm's length of a Pariah, and who shouts when he turns a corner in order that certain inferior castes may get out of the way—how could such a man ever consent to rub shoulders in a railway carriage with the humblest castes in India?

And, sir, had the railway companies posted a notice outside the stations to say that they could not tolerate any distinctions of caste, and that Brahmins, sweepers, and Pariahs, if they paid the same fare, would be put into the same carriage, every man would have roused himself up and asked himself whether an attack was not intended on our social institutions. But the companies wisely ignored the whole subject, and as nothing was said about it people quietly put their caste in their pocket. And thus this impregnable and (to you) immovable institution proved itself to be as elastic as most institutions usually are when the time has arrived for their modification. To us Hindoos it is half amusing, and yet half annoying, to hear and read of the twaddle that is talked about this universal bugbear—this cast-iron institution which nothing can either alter or overcome, while all the time it is daily altering and accommodating itself to the varying conditions of Indian life."

"My friend," replied the missionary, "this may be all very true, but the reason my people refuse to baptize any one until he has renounced all these practices which make up what we call caste, is that caste is part of your religion, and is held to be of divine origin, just as much as are the Hindoo Scriptures. This was the view taken by Bishop Wilson, and hence he said that, before a Hindoo

could become a Christian he must abandon every particular which marked him as being in any way different from a European follower of Christ, and this too even as regards peculiarities of food or dress."

"Sir," replied the Brahmin, "what reason can there be in this? If you converted a Jew in England, would you ask him if he was ready to prove his sincerity by eating a dish of pork? Would you ask him to partake of food cooked by the lowest Pariahs of London? If he happened to be a teetotaler, would you ask him to express his readiness to partake of any form of alcohol?"

"Certainly not," observed the missionary, "but we wish to alter your social customs because the spirit of them seems to be so entirely hostile to our idea of what Christianity ought to be, and especially because, as I said before, it is part of your idolatrous religion."

"Sir," answered the Brahmin, "if believing in Hindoo idolatry and believing in caste were exchangeable terms, you would, no doubt, be perfectly justified in taking up the line you have adopted; but it can easily be shown that the view of caste entertained by your missionaries is entirely erroneous. And in order that I may convince you through the medium of one who is at once learned and unprejudiced, I will quote Max Müller. That

eminent scholar has shown you as clearly as possible how caste was first of all ethnological, or how, in other words, it was simply a race distinction between my Aryan ancestors, and the original tribes they found in possession of India. He then shows how naturally political caste arose, and how a military nobility and a priestly hierarchy split off from the great body of citizens. And, lastly, he shows how professional caste arose as society advanced—how various trades and professions became more influential and respectable than others, and how a state of things arose which resulted in what were called in Europe guilds and corporations, but which we talk of as this trading caste or that.* To a mind like Max Müller's there is nothing strange, nothing irregular in our social state; and the last thing that would occur to him would be to imagine that the whole system of caste was imposed on the people by the imperious will of an idolatrous priesthood as part and parcel of their religion. He distinctly tells you that 'Caste, in the modern sense of the word, is no religious institution, and that it has no authority in the sacred writings of the Brahmins.' I must, however, admit that another Sanskrit Professor, of at least equal learning, has adopted a different view. He is of opinion that, though caste had no sort of

* *Chips from a German Workshop*, vol. ii. p. 318.

religious sanction in the most ancient Vedic days, still, in consequence of an ingenious priesthood having twined up the whole Hindoo social life into their religious system, it may be almost said that believing in caste and believing in the Hindoo religion are exchangeable terms. He, of course, holds that the actual Hindoo religion consists of the most ancient Hindoo Scriptures, *plus* all that the ingenuity of the Brahmins has piled on the top of it. I confess, sir, that I cannot adopt this view, and it seems very like saying that before your Reformation the true Christian religion consisted of the Bible *plus* all the absurdities piled on the top of it by the priests of Rome. But, sir, however all that may be, the Professor alluded to admits that, though caste is a part of the Hindoo religion, it has not therefore anything to do with Hindoo idolatry, nor is it mixed up with any sectarian form of worship; and he says very truly, that it is not necessarily so, because Hindoo religion includes believers of all kinds, from pure theists to the grossest idolaters. There is, however, another, and a far more practical question to be asked, and it is this: Do the people, as a matter of fact, believe that caste customs have anything to do with religion or its observances? That, sir, is really the key of the position; and I think we need not have the slightest hesitation in

saying that the masses of the people—the agricultural classes—follow caste customs without thinking them to be in any way religious, or indeed going to the trouble of forming any opinion at all regarding them. Now, as far as I know, none of your people have thought of asking that very practical question, but have referred, as evidence of the feelings and notions of the Indians, to books written centuries ago, by those who were most interested in carrying caste to the greatest possible length."

"My friend," observed the missionary, "there certainly seems to be a good deal in what you say; and I confess that I am partly inclined to adopt your view of the matter, and to consider that we should rather form our opinions as regards the nature of caste from the actual belief of the people, than from those written statements we have hitherto relied on. But even if we admit that caste has nothing to do with your idolatrous religion, and that it is purely a social institution, I cannot see how we as Christians could else baptize one who adheres to a system so contrary to the whole spirit of Christianity, to a system so haughtily exclusive, that there is no chance of one of the lower classes, whatever his merits may be, raising himself in the social scale."

"Sir," replied the Brahmin, "I freely admit

that there are barriers of caste, and a number of troublesome restrictions connected with it, that I should like to see set aside; but it is simply not true to say that a man of wealth and talent is not practically raised in the social scale. But I do not think we need spend much time in enquiring whether our social restrictions are or are not compatible with your ideal of Christianity. Can there be no Christianity short of a certain social condition? Why, sir, by your own showing you would have us believe that Christianity is as inelastic and unvarying as you imagine our caste institutions to be. But when we look into the history of Christianity in Europe we shall find that nothing has varied so much. Even now, is it the same thing in France, England, and in Germany? When, however, we come to look a good many centuries back, we find that Christianity co-existed with a system of castes quite as strongly marked as ours ever were; and if you will only glance at the history of the nobles, citizens, and serfs, you will see that Christianity has stretched itself to the very condition of society which you now tell us is entirely incompatible with the religion of Christ. But this is far from being the only instance of the elastic nature of Christianity. Can anything imaginable be more hostile to its spirit than slavery? And yet we nowhere find Christ and his disciples

saying that slavery is incompatible with Christianity. So far from refusing to baptize a man who kept slaves, we find one of the apostles sending back a slave to his master. In no instance in the world till we come to India do we find the religion of Christ preached as something that is meant to tear the whole fabric of society to pieces, and when you proclaim your communistic doctrine here—when you say that our social distinctions and customs must be summarily rejected, you have preached a socialism that we do not want, and will never listen to. You yourselves, in coming here, and levelling attacks on our institutions, are the greatest enemies of your religion. And not only do you injure the prospects of your religion, but you raise an active prejudice against your race by causing us to think that they are bitterly hostile to caste, and will do everything possible to break it down. The fact is, sir, that you should preach your religion, and leave our customs alone, trusting to what has been happily called the solvent power of Christianity for doing away by degrees with whatever may be hostile to its spirit. And you should extend to us that right of private judgment which you yourselves would enjoy, and leave our consciences to decide as to what parts of our customs should be retained or abandoned."

"My friend," replied the missionary, "there certainly seems to be a good deal of common sense in your view of the matter; and I shall be sure to think much of all you have said, and will besides send an account of our conversation to our people at home. Before parting with you, however, I should like to hear how you would set to work if you wanted to spread the religion of Christ amongst the masses of your ignorant countrymen."

"In the first place," replied the Brahmin, "I would do what I suggested you should do at the beginning of our yesterday's conversation, viz., climb up into the tree of Hindoo religion, and cut therefrom a limb to hew down the idolatry of the people. In other words, I would compile a book of extracts from the best of our ancient writings, which inculcate the worship of the one True, Omnipotent God, the Creator of the world, and amongst these extracts would of course be given examples of the purest prayers of the ancient Vedic days. I would then, were I a missionary, take up my abode in a large village in one of the rural districts, and resolve never to marry, but to lay out myself for living amongst the people as one of themselves; eating of their fare; sleeping in their houses when occasion arose, and attending of course to the poor and sick. I would then take my Bible in one hand, and my book of the best

form of Hindoo religion in the other. If the people would not listen to the Bible (a thing they would soon tire of, if my experience is good for anything), I would then preach to them about their own religion, show them what the best of their ancestors really believed, and urge them to follow their example. This I am confident would effectually lay the axe to the root of the tree of Idolatry, and in the course of time the people would gradually rise to the worship of the One True God, or in other words, to a pure Theism. At this point, however, they would never stop, because all our experience of human nature shows that a pure Theism can never satisfy the religious wants of mankind as at present constituted. Then would the people come to you, and spontaneously seek out the admirable religion of Christ. This I would preach in its purest, simplest, and above all in its widest form; and so far from saying anything against, I would preach the universal toleration of all customs which did not involve idol worship; and thus, sir, I think you might easily introduce your Christianity, and when it was once introduced, you might leave it alone to break down the barriers of caste, and act gradually on society, just as it has acted in Europe for the last eighteen centuries."

"My friend," observed the missionary, "your scheme seems certainly a practical one; but it

is far too much in advance of the age to be adopted by my people, who, I feel sure, will teach away in their schools and denounce your caste customs till the subscribers are tired out, and the missions die a natural death. But, my friend, the sun is fast going down, and unless I start without delay I shall be benighted." Saying thus, and shaking the Brahmin heartily by the hand, the missionary mounted his pony, and set out on his way to the next halting place.

CONCERNING JOHN'S INDIAN AFFAIRS.

III.

MY DEAR JOHN,—When I last had the pleasure of seeing you, I really thought I had got through everything of pressing importance regarding the management, or, I should rather say, the mismanagement, of your Indian estates. I had, however, hardly reached home when I found that I had omitted to bring to your notice some matters that demand immediate attention. This induced me to beg for a third interview, which, after some delay, you were kind enough to grant. The conversation, you will remember, was long, and ranged over a variety of topics. Some of these, though interesting enough, were perhaps hardly worth your serious consideration; but others seemed so important, that I may as well remind you of at least a portion of our long and varied discussion.

I commenced the conversation, you will remember, by calling your attention to various facts

that confirmed some of the statements which I made when we last met, and, amongst the number, drew particular attention to the rottenness of the barracks built by your Indian agents. The dissolution of these buildings has indeed become so regular, that in these days of telegrams it has been necessary to invent a new term which shall convey at once briefly and expressively these every-day occurrences of Indian life; and when we read of another avalanche, or threatened avalanche, of barracks, we find that the language has risen to the occasion. It will suffice to allude to the Saugor and Allahabad barracks as a specimen of this class of cases.* I next proceeded to give you a remarkable example† of the credulity of the people

* Amidst the ruins of tumble-down barracks we find the Government enquiring "whether a cement can be manufactured from any of the Indian limestones capable of application under the varying circumstances and climates found throughout India." This seems to be really a step in the right direction, and is very like asking whether clay suited to the varied requirements of the English bricklayer can be found in these islands. If our enquirers will only turn to the permanent structures of the Hindoos, Mahommedans, Dutch, and Portuguese, they will find a ready-made answer to their question.

† In my first letter I showed how the people in the rural districts are absolutely at the mercy of the tax-gatherer, who is necessarily their sole informant as to the varying demands of the Government. But I cannot resist quoting the following amusing illustration of the credulity of the people. In 1855, when Jacob was in charge of the Sawunt Waree Territory, the following incident occurred. "An impostor," he tells us, "went about the country levying a war cess in my name; his

in the more remote districts, with the view of showing you how easily they can be defrauded in the name of the Government, and how imprudent it therefore is to start new taxes, which, in the hands of unscrupulous officials, can readily be turned into intolerable engines of oppression. I then offered some proofs to show that the income-tax which had been so bitterly complained of, has to a large extent fallen on the heavily taxed agricultural classes; and referred you to an instructive minute from the pen of the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, who seems to have discovered that some 34,000 mere cultivators have been assessed to a tax on incomes of not less than £50 a year. But as the *Englishman* truly says, "To us it is a less grave question how much wrongful assessment the amount levied from the 34,375 cultivators represents, than how much extortion was inflicted on ryots who were not assessed." And the *Englishman* very justly comes to the conclusion that unless the profits of agriculture are much higher

credentials an empty gooseberry bottle of Crosse and Blackwell, the royal arms in gilt letters on its label, and a paper of sham English writing, headed by a supposed official seal that was merely the impression made by the bung of a mustard jar. Yet these precious credentials had sufficed for several villages, till he was unwise enough to venture where he met with a functionary sufficiently acute to deal with him. When on his trial all the foregoing were fully proved."—Jacob's *Western India*, p. 121.

than in England, the 34,000 odd cultivators just represent so many poor people who had failed to bribe the officials. But the fact is, my dear John, that your agents were bound to get money out of some one, and it was simply a case of "get money, honestly if you can, but get money." They have, in short, gone back to the days of Warren Hastings, when the cry was, "Govern leniently, but get more money," or, in other words, be at once the fathers and the oppressors of the people. It is in vain that the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal exclaims against the disgraceful way the tax has been levied in that province. Equally ridiculous is it to read that the Government of India has passed a resolution on the mal-administration of the income-tax in the North-West Provinces. With the tax-collecting machinery at the disposal of your agents, there must be gross fraud and gross injustice. Let me tell you a story. Not very long ago I met a native gentleman, who has now retired from your service, in which he had risen to the rank of deputy collector. In the course of conversation we discussed the income-tax, and the way in which it is levied. "Well," said my friend, "I'll tell you my experience. I was told to raise as much money as I could, but finding that with all my exertions my return fell far short of that of my neighbours in the

adjoining districts, and knowing full well that my reputation would rise or fall with the amount of my collections, I simply issued orders to double the amount of assessment, and so raised my collection to a satisfactory sum." This, you said, seemed really a sad state of affairs; "but, after all," you continued, "the people, I am told, are not taxed nearly so much as in other countries, and the taxation per head is higher in Turkey, Russia, Spain, Austria, and England." Now, my dear John, this may be very true, and I have no doubt your Indian agents chuckled with satisfaction at being able to produce such pleasing proofs of the lightness of Indian taxation as compared with that of other countries. But the statement, though true in itself, is entirely misleading. Taxation is either high or low, not as regards the amount per head, but as regards the percentage it bears to the income of the population. When, then, we come to compare the incidence of taxation in India and England, and take into account the income of each country, we shall find that the taxation of the former country is twice as much as that of the latter. I do not, of course, allege that the calculation of the income of India can at all approach to mathematical accuracy, but I have no doubt it is sufficiently near to show you that to go on adding to the taxation as your

agents are doing now, and have been doing for some time, is simply an act of the grossest barbarity, to say nothing of its being attended with serious political dangers. Thereupon you said that you would call the attention of the Finance Committee to the matter, and see what they had to say; and you further observed that you had no time to hear anything more on the subject, especially as the phrase "political dangers" reminded you that there had been a great deal said lately as to the loyalty of the Indian Mahommedans. "I should much like," you continued, "to hear what you have to say as regards these people. There has been, I am told, a regular book devoted to them and their grievances, besides a great deal of newspaper correspondence, which I have neither time nor inclination to look at. Then there is a certain sect I've heard a great deal about, the name of which, I know, commences with a W. If you could only lay before me the leading points of the matter I should really be very glad, as I mean to try to make myself somewhat acquainted with my Indian affairs before Parliament meets." After a short pause to collect my thoughts on the subject, I then proceeded to say my say. As usual, I was interrupted occasionally by objections and criticisms, many of which sounded so plausible, that I may as well

remind you of nearly the whole of our discussion regarding the Indian Musalmans.

I commenced, you will remember, by making some allusion to a remarkable, and as far as we are concerned, a disagreeably remarkable book,* written by a very able agent of yours, who seems for years to have devoted a great deal of attention to the Indian Musalmans. His book, I may observe, is complete, and to the point; and the only thing to be regretted is, that he has contrived to weave around them that sensational web which people love to spin around the wrecks of ancient and noble houses. But, my dear John, we must strip the tale of its brilliant colouring, and look at the facts in all their naked simplicity. At first sight it really seems a melancholy business to contemplate the fate of one of these Mahommedan houses; and when we come to look at it through the medium of Mr. Hunter's pages, it seems difficult to repress a vein of sentiment. He gives us, for instance, the history of the Rajas of Nagar, and tells how they once looked forth from the pillared gallery of their palace over a principality which now makes up two English districts. Their mosques and countless summer pavilions glittered around the margin of an artificial lake, and cast their reflection on its

* *The Indian Musalmans.* By W. W. Hunter. Trübner & Co., London.

surface, unbroken by a single water weed. Through the crystal waters a gilded barge proudly cut its way. Soldiers relieved guard on the citadel; and ever as the sun declined, the laughter of many children, and the tinkling of ladies' lutes, rose from behind the wall of the princesses' garden. Now, however, the glory of all these things has departed, and the grandeur of the house of Nagar has indeed gone by. The palace is a wreck, the fishponds are dark, filthy hollows, and the gardens have returned to jungle, or been converted into rice fields. Princesses indeed there are, but they no longer go forth in the covered barge at evening. The luxurious zenana is roofless, and its inmates have been removed to a mean tenement overlooking a stable-yard, while the representative of this princely race mopes away his miserable days chewing drugged sweetmeats, and looking gloomily out on the weed-choked lake. Now, my dear John, all this seems piteous enough, and no doubt it is melancholy enough; but it is only melancholy as a record of the weakness of the human animal under certain conditions, and the key of the whole story is to be found in one little sentence of Mr. Hunter's book, which tells us that "when the British first came in contact with the Rajas of Nagar, their yearly revenues, after two centuries of folly and waste, amounted to fifty thousand pounds." In that folly

and waste were naturally contained the elements of decay. It is not even attempted to be shown that the British caused this fifty thousand a year to diminish in any way, and the house of Nagar is no more to be pitied than the house of an English duke would be, whose family went persistently to the dogs till there was nothing left of their ancient nobility except the empty name. A few special wrongs the Musalmans indeed have, as we shall see; some very great wrongs they are, no doubt, still suffering from, as we shall also see; but these great and crying wrongs are only wrongs that are shared in common by all the foremost races in India. Before, however, I commence to speak of these wrongs, both great and small, I may as well give you a short account of the sect you have alluded to, of the rebel camp beyond the frontier of your Indian estates, and of the organization which has cost your agents so much blood and treasure. I shall at the same time enquire into the causes of these signs of rottenness in the State. Finally, I shall endeavour to point out the only method of cutting off those springs of discontent which, unless removed, must eventually convert your Indian estates into the bitterest thorn that was ever lodged in the side of the British Lion.

To commence with, my dear John, allow me to inform you that the Mahommedans of India would

very naturally like to get rid of you and your government, which have simply stood between them and those positions, great or small, which they imagine they might have held had the English never set foot in India. Here you begged leave to interrupt me for one moment. "Why, my good man," you observed, "I am told that it was only the other day that several letters appeared in the *Times* which were written by Indian Musalmans, and that these letters assured the public that it was perfectly disgraceful to say anything of the kind, and that the Musalmans yielded to no class in India as regards loyalty to the British Government." Now, my dear John, I saw these letters also, and I simply came to the conclusion, as many others no doubt have too, that much as the Indian Mahommedans have been abused for their intolerance, for their stupid indifference to progress, and for sullenly holding aloof from our educational system, no worse thing has ever been said of them. To declare that a people can be supplanted, kicked down hill, and oppressed by a superior race, without feeling a wish to turn and rend their conquerors, is tantamount to declaring that the conquered race is made up of a mass of miserable, spiritless slaves. I for one do not think so badly of the Indian Mahommedans, and therefore I have all the more hopes of their rising out of their

present slough of despondency. But, my dear John, we must not shut our eyes to the fact, that unless the Indian Musalmans shake themselves up, and adapt themselves to the altered conditions of Indian life, they must always be a source of danger to our empire in the East; for it is contrary to all the laws of human nature that it should be otherwise. Let me tell you a story which will just take up a couple of sentences. Some fifteen years ago I had in my employ as an overseer of coolies an illegitimate grandson of the Sultan Tippoo. Labour in Southern India was then worth less than a third of what it is now, and the salary of the overseer in question was exactly twelve shillings, not a week, but a month, and out of this pittance the man had to feed himself and his family. He could read and write in his own language, I may add; and his father, as one of the descendants of Tippoo, had a small allowance from Government. Now, you can easily imagine that people who are driven to such shifts to find a livelihood are not likely to be much in love with your rule. In some parts of India, it is true, the Musalmans had already been supplanted by the Seiks and Maharattas, but the memory of the martyr Tippoo must still be fresh throughout Southern India; and it is ridiculous to suppose, in any case, that the descendants of a once dominant race will eat the bread of poverty in

humble thankfulness that they have at least food wherewith to keep body and soul together. Your Indian agents, I know, are very unwilling to recognise, or rather to acknowledge, the necessary hostility of the Mahommedan population; and were this the only disagreeable fact they are unwilling to acknowledge, you might perhaps be inclined to suspect that my conclusions are either incorrect or exaggerated. But if you will only reflect for one moment, you will see that your Indian agents have always resolutely shut their eyes to any facts that tend to prove the dangers of our situation in India. There are several reasons for this. One is, that an Englishman is always afraid to appear afraid; the second is, that Englishmen have a remarkable capacity for believing what they wish to believe, and cling to their convictions with a sometimes blind and fatal obstinacy. The third—and no doubt the principal—reason is, that the Government of India has got into a financial hobble, and knows full well that it has run its taxational resources so hard that, considering the enormous sums of English capital sunk in India, even a temporary disturbance of its authority could only be looked upon as an appalling calamity. The sad fate of many of our countrymen in the Indian mutinies is a melancholy instance of the first and second failings alluded to; while the

tendency of your Indian agents to shut their eyes to anything that threatens the disturbance of order was never more conclusively shown than in the history of the Santhal insurrection. The tale is well told in the *Annals of Rural Bengal*, where Mr. Hunter points out that if the English community is naturally prone to exaggerate dangers, the government, on the other hand, is apt to underrate even in a greater and more fatal degree circumstances that threaten the disturbance of order. The consequence of this spirit was that the Santhals for a whole fortnight spread fire and sword throughout the country they operated on; and the most absurd part of the story is that the local officials would not recognise this as a rebellion. Each magistrate put off as long as possible the admission that his district was in arms against the Government. Men who should have been arrested as rebels were simply charged with burglary, or "for assembling illegally and riotously with offensive weapons for the purpose of plunder, and to commit a serious breach of the peace." In time, however, these people with their offensive weapons were really discovered to be rebels, but the recognition came too late to save a large amount of loss and bloodshed that might easily have been averted had the officials not determinedly shut their eyes. Now, my dear John,

you must always remember that the same causes which have always blinded your Indian agents exist now, and are blinding them at this moment; and it is certainly high time that you should provide yourself with some machinery which shall steer the ship clear of the rocks. Here you reminded me that I had better get on with the Indian Musalmans, as you would like to hear about them without further delay, so I at once began to lay before you a brief outline of their position.

And first of all, my dear John, as to these Wahabis. To picture to yourself a Wahabi, you must simply imagine a kind of Mahommedan Puritan. At the best he is a man who desires to simplify the Mahommedan creed as much as possible, and reduce it, or rather raise it, to the purest Unitarianism. He is a man, too, who advocates a severely religious and moral life, and strives after the universal regeneration of the followers of the Prophet. At the worst, or at least the worst for us, he is a man one of whose leading doctrines inculcates constant recognition, both in theory and practice, of the obligation to wage war upon all infidels, and who accordingly has persistently plotted for the overthrow of British rule in India, and cost us no small amount of blood and money. As a Wahabi, who is simply a religious regenerator, he is looked upon as a

nuisance, and cordially detested, for the simple reason that people don't like reformers who make religion more irksome, and its duties more onerous. The Wahabis, as religious reformers, are therefore thoroughly harmless. When, however, they combine sedition with religion, they strike a key in the Mahommedan heart which cannot fail to rouse the sympathies and excite the hopes of people who are conscious that they are daily losing ground in the battle of life. Most of the advanced Mahommedans, it is true, are not to be affected by these seditious preachings, and no doubt believe that they have resigned themselves to our rule. But do not let us take much comfort from that fact. It is easy to talk of the strength of a castle that has never been seriously besieged. Some temptation certainly existed during the great mutiny, but it was not sufficient. When a real temptation arises—when the day arrives that Indian discontents are at their height, while our hands are full to overflowing in Europe—it will then remain to be seen whether the Musalmans of India will not strike one blow for freedom. But whatever may be the present feelings of the more educated classes, it is certain that the Wahabis have found both men and money to plot and war against us, and that too in the very heart of our dominions. But I must now enter into a few

details, which I hope will put you in possession of the leading facts of the situation.

The Wahabis, and those who supported them, were far too well aware of the strength of the British power to attempt a rising in the heart of our dominions. Some other base of operations was therefore wanting. Nor were they long in finding one. Amongst the bleak and inaccessible mountains which rise beyond the Punjab are tribes who are only too glad to shelter and support those who promise boundless plunder and oceans of infidel blood. In these regions, accordingly, the Wahabis found a convenient home. There they formed a rebel camp, and thence spun a web of disaffection, which we know has stretched far and wide, and which, in all probability, is already extended from one end of India to the other. In the formation of such a camp for a nearly similar purpose there was nothing new. If the Mahommedans hated us, they equally hated the Seiks, and a fanatical settlement in these mountains gave Runjeet Singh quite as much trouble and anxiety as it ever caused the British power. The fanatical camp which warred against the Seiks has simply turned itself into a rebel camp which wars against the English, and endeavours to spread discontent and sedition throughout our dominions. Not to trouble you

with details which will only make you impatient, I may simply say that between 1850 and 1863 we had to despatch against the camp twenty separate expeditions, aggregating 60,000 regular troops, besides irregular auxiliaries and police. If these expeditions had led to any definite result, we might have consoled ourselves that we had got something for our money; but the frontier was as bad, or worse, than ever; and money and disaffected men, drawn from the very navel of our dominions, still kept pouring into the rebel camp. The end of all this was that in 1863 we embarked in a campaign against our old enemies. On the 18th of October General Sir Neville Chamberlain put in motion a British army of 7,000 men and a train of artillery. But before long the whole frontier was in a blaze. A coalition of the various tribes arrayed against us a force which made the result of the campaign at least critical; and the General's force had to be recruited by 2,000 additional troops. But the war was not to be fought out to the bitter end. The Commissioner of Peshawur succeeded in drawing off certain clans of the Bonairs. Some minor chiefs, scenting the defection, withdrew. The coalition, like most other coalitions of mountain tribes, melted away, and our troops left the country. What the enemy lost is not exactly known, but we lost 847 men, killed and wounded, or nearly one-

tenth of the total force; and this, too, takes no account of men invalided from exposure or who died of disease. Well might the Punjab Government say in summing up the result of the campaign that these fanatics "were no harmless or powerless religionists, and that they are a permanent source of danger to our rule in India." They now remained quiet for the next four years, but a fresh outbreak occurred in 1868; we had again to take the field, and at an enormous cost placed on the Black Mountain a force so strong that the borderers did not dare to face it. It was a misfortune, indeed, that they did not dare to face it, and it would have been good policy to have drawn them out by pushing forward a feeble force, and then retreating on to supports that would have given the fanatics a lasting lesson. As it was, we spent our money and got nothing in return except that we taught the fanatics that they can, any day they choose, put us to enormous trouble and expense without the slightest fear of any serious loss on their part. The result was, as usual, summed up by the Punjab Government, which recorded a regret that the campaign had come to a close without our either being able to drive out the Hindustani fanatics, or to induce them to surrender and return to their homes in Hindustan. So, my dear John, the evil is as far from being cured

as ever. The rebel camp is there, all ready for mischief whenever a fitting opportunity occurs, and it keeps up a regular correspondence with those seditious masses in the heart of your empire who feed the camp with both men and money.

And now, my dear John, I trust you will allow me to call your attention to that chronic state of conspiracy existing in your dominions. I have called your attention to that most dangerous feature in the English character, the being afraid to be afraid. Hence arises the failing to provide against coming dangers, which is one of the most distressing points connected with our administration in the East. If a famine occurs in India we set to work and try to relieve it, but it never occurs to us to take precautions of any kind. We wait till hundreds of thousands have perished, and then we hasten to the support of the survivors. And similarly, if an insurrection takes place we hasten to stamp it out; but to take any precautions—to attempt to cut off as far as we can the immediate or remote causes of insurrections—is about the last thing that occurs to Englishmen in India. Hence, without let or hindrance, we have allowed sedition to be preached and practised throughout our dominions by a regular organization of Wahabi missionaries. There is something exceedingly characteristic in this stupid indifference to danger,

and it is difficult to repress a smile when we hear that "the Wahabi missionary has little to fear from the magistrates of the districts through which he passes. And indeed," continues Mr. Hunter, "his favourite preaching-ground is the open space thronged with suitors outside the magistrate's court." But the whole of Mr. Hunter's chapter on "the Chronic Conspiracy within our Territory" discloses a state of things as extraordinary as it is discreditable to those who have been entrusted with the responsibility of looking after our Indian affairs; and well may Mr. Hunter say that the evidence which came out last year when two district centres were broken up might well appal any alien Government less confident (he might have said less *stupidly* confident) in its own integrity than that of British India. For, the fact is, my dear John, that the work of sedition has been reduced to a regular system, with the most perfect organization for transmitting men and money to the rebel camp. Traitor settlements have been established throughout rural Bengal. Then there is a central propaganda at Patna, with district centres in various parts of the country, each one of which has its own system for raising money and recruits complete within itself. Mr. Hunter gives an ample account of the minuteness of the machinery employed by different head-

centres, and these disclosures exhibit an amount of zeal for the cause far beyond what we could possibly imagine. During the last seven years traitor after traitor has been convicted and sentenced to transportation for life, and yet at this moment a large body of prisoners drawn from widely different districts are either undergoing punishment or waiting for trial. Every war on the frontier is followed by a State trial in our dominions, and at these trials all classes are represented. In July, 1864, before Sir Herbert Edwardes, the Musalman subjects of the Crown standing at the bar for high treason included, we are told, "priests of the highest family, an army contractor and wholesale butcher, a scrivener, a soldier, an itinerant preacher, a house steward, and a husbandman." It may be a comforting theory, my dear John, to assume, as many have done, that it is only men belonging to the criminal ranks of society that are thus arrayed against us, but it is far safer to assume the worst than the best state of things, and, until the contrary be proved, it would be far better to believe that the conspiracy has ramifications throughout all classes of the community.

At this point of the discussion you observed that you had heard quite enough of the Wahabis and their conspiracies, and that it was now time to talk

of what was to be done for the future. To this I replied that I should lose as little time as possible, but that it would be instructing and interesting to glance at the duties performed by the individual who was spiritual director of the sect in India some years ago. His name was Yahiya Ali. "He corresponded," we are told by Mr. Hunter, "with all the itinerant preachers as spiritual director of the sect in India. He organized and personally worked a complicated system of drafts in a secret language, by which large sums were safely transmitted from the centre of the empire to the rebel camp beyond the frontier. He conducted the public ministrations in the mosque. He examined and passed the rifles for the fanatic host, delivered a course of divinity lectures to the students, and by private study acquired an intimate acquaintance with the Arabic fathers." But it was in the transmission of recruits that his genius particularly shone. The Bengali convert, it appears, was liable to a hundred awkward questions when on his two-thousand mile march to the rebel camp. It became therefore expedient to take charge of him throughout the entire route. Over the immense stretch of territory between Bengal and the rebel camp Yahiya Ali organized a complete line of hospices, so that at the end of every day's march the recruit found himself amongst friends, who supplied his

wants and bid him God speed on the way to join the ranks of our enemies. The heads of the hospices were men of various ranks of life, each the president of a local committee of conspirators. Even to check an organization so complete in all its parts as this, is of course enormously expensive, and the worst of it is, that we have allowed the disaffection to be so widely spread that it is difficult to know where to begin. "At this moment," we are told by Mr. Hunter, "the cost of watching the Wahabis and keeping them within bounds amounts in a single province to as much as would suffice for the administration, judicial and criminal, of a British district containing one-third of the whole population of Scotland." And how, it may be asked, has the necessity for such an expenditure been brought about? How, further, have these disastrous frontier campaigns, or at least the whole of them since 1858, being thrust upon us? Well, whatever may have been the remote causes of disaffection, the whole of these disastrous affairs may be distinctly traced to the cowardice or negligence of the British Government, which failed to deal vigorously with the evil when it was first brought to light. From failing summarily to arrest and imprison the preachers of sedition, and those whose names were on the police lists as well-known fomenters of sedition, a system was organ-

ized, and gradually strengthened under our very noses. And the worst of this neglect of danger was that it aggravated the ultimate danger in every kind of way. Nor does it require much knowledge of human nature to enable us to assert that the preachers of sedition proclaimed through the length and breadth of the land that the rulers of India were afraid to arrest them, or even to attempt to stop their mouths, and that they were only waiting for a fitting opportunity to rise and drive the infidels into the sea.

And now, my dear John, allow me to say a few words on a branch of the subject to which Mr. Hunter has devoted a considerable portion of his interesting volume. I allude to the question discussed in the third chapter, which treats of the opinions of the Mahommedan law doctors, as to whether, from a Musalman's point of view, India is or is not a country of the enemy, and whether, if it be so, it is not the duty of all Mahommedans either to wage war against us, or leave our territories forthwith. Now this may be an interesting question, but it is in reality a matter of not the slightest practical consequence how the law doctors may decide it. Favourable or unfavourable to us, their decisions would produce hardly the smallest practical effect as regards the actions of those who wish for peace and quiet. The main

point to be kept in view is that, as stated by Mr. Hunter, "the Wahabis to a man, and a large proportion of the devout Musalmans, believe India to be now a country of the enemy." Nor does the assurance that "the more sensible majority of them, while sorrowfully lamenting its lapsed state, are willing to accept the duties belonging to that condition," bring with it much comfort. And, as I have said before, it is at once wiser and safer to look on the worst side, and assume that under sufficiently strong temptation they would to a man throw in their lot with their countrymen, and endeavour to regain at least a portion of that exalted position they once held in India. Dismissing then this part of the subject as being of little practical importance, let me now turn your attention for a few moments to the wrongs of Mahommedans under British rule.

The Mahommedan community, my dear John, has of course a great deal to say against your Government in India. They have, in short, as many complaints as people usually have when they find that under any particular form of government they are daily losing ground in the battle of life. And it cannot be denied that the Indian Musalmans are really sinking deeper and deeper, and being ridden over by the Hindoo race they once trampled under foot. The most promi-

nent proof we have of this lies in the fact that they are rapidly disappearing from the public services in which they formerly held a fair proportion of appointments. And turn where you will, you will find the same thing going on. In the law, for instance, you will find that the door is almost more firmly shut against the Musalman than it is in the public services. Within the memory of men still living, the list of pleaders of the High Court, a sort of inferior barristers, were almost exclusively Musalmans. Up to 1851 they still held their own, but after this year different tests of fitness were exacted, and the Musalmans went so completely to the wall, that out of two hundred and forty natives admitted from 1852 to 1868, there was only one Musalman. Every corner of the law, too, tells the same tale so completely that I need not trouble you with further details. Then if we turn from law to medicine, we shall again find the Hindoo coming almost exclusively to the front, while the Musalman appears only as an occasional speck in the field. Try whatever branch of civil or public life you like, and you will find the same result. Altogether, my dear John, there cannot be the slightest doubt that if things go on as they are doing at present, this proud and once dominant race must inevitably sink to the level of hewers of wood and drawers of water. Now, though your

agents can do something for the Mahommedans that will give them a better chance, I am very far from saying that anything that could be done would prevent the Musalman being outstripped by the Hindoo in the struggle for existence. Man for man, there cannot be a doubt that in every branch of civil life the Hindoo is more fitted to excel than the Musalman. The latter, it is true, has a stouter heart, a stronger arm, and is perhaps more fitted for political organization than the former. But in intellectual quickness, in patient industry, in the abstemiousness of his habits, and above all in the readiness with which he adapts himself to altered circumstances, the Hindoo has resources which bear him clean over the heads of his former masters. Man for man, he would in most cases excel; but when we come to add the weight of numbers, it is plain that the Mahommedan can have no chance in the competition. Your agents, then, my dear John, cannot affect the inevitable result. All that they can possibly do will be to see that the money contributed by Mahommedans for educational purposes is spent on an educational system which is suited to their requirements.* All the grievances they can possibly re-

* Mr. Hunter (vide *The Indian Musalmans*, pp. 205—7) shows how easily and cheaply provision might be made for the education of the Mahommedans.

dress will be to re-appoint these Kazis* who are indispensable to Mahommedan domestic and religious observances, and to restore to the Musalman community some charitable funds which rightly belong to them, but which have been seized and deliberately misappropriated by your Indian agents. Here you begged to interrupt me for one moment just to say that I must be entirely mistaken. "Why," you continued, "I am told on all hands, that it is only the extraordinary moral hold my

* It is difficult to ascertain the exact nature of the loss the Musalmans have sustained by our refusal to appoint Kazis in future. Syed Ahmed Bahadoor, in his pamphlet on Dr. Hunter's *Indian Musalmans*, p. 91, says that "the abolition of the offices of Kazis, who gave religious sanction to the marriage-tie, was, with regard to the political status of the present century, a grave political error. It interfered, however, in no way with our faith, though the uneducated opined it did. According to Islam, marriage is simply a contract of union for life between man and woman. In some cases the presence of two witnesses is deemed necessary, but not the presence of Kazi or any priest. The Kazis of India were, as perhaps our author is not aware, the most illiterate class of men, and the better class of Mahommedans had but little respect for them." These points are well worthy of notice, as they show us how careful we ought to be in making any changes in India (I do not, of course, include changes which are made with the view of abolishing crimes such as human sacrifices), without consulting the wishes of the people. The abolition of the office, or rather the abolition of the custom of our making appointments to it, did not, it appears, interfere with Mahommedan faith, in the opinion of the educated; but if "the uneducated opined that it did," it is plain that, for all practical purposes, there has been an interference, and this has been so real that the action of our Government in this matter is termed "a grave political error," by a Musalman of high attainments, and the best means of forming a correct opinion.

agents have acquired over the minds of the natives that enables us to keep the country at all. But the integrity of my Indian agents (at least, according to their own showing) is above all suspicion. To do anything shabby, mean, or at all approaching to dishonesty in their dealings with their neighbours, is a thing, I believe, they are entirely incapable of. It is true, I must admit, that from failing to comprehend aright the Hindoo law of adoption, some States were here and there annexed when the main line of the reigning families died out. But my agents are now beginning to understand the law better, and a splendid instance of their generosity occurred only a few years ago, when they actually allowed the late Rajah of Mysore to adopt a successor to the Throne. Some malicious persons, I know, have alleged that my agents had fully intended to seize the province in question, that they had already filled it well with English officials, and were only restrained from devouring it bodily by an order from the Secretary of State in England; but I don't believe a word of it. My Indian agents may have committed blunders, I admit; but their great moral worth, their integrity, and the noble way they have invariably treated the weaker Powers they came in contact with, place them at the head of the whole world." To this little outburst I listened pa-

tiently, and when you had quite done, proceeded to say that if, as regards the charitable funds alluded to, the facts given by Mr. Hunter (one of your own agents) are correctly stated, there cannot be a doubt that a meaner piece of pillage was never perpetrated by the Indian or any other Government, and that the maintenance of such a wrong emphatically gives the lie to those boasts of public integrity we have heard so much of. And this public wrong is the more grievous because it is quite certain that if the money in question had been properly applied, the Musalmans would have had one of the most efficient educational establishments in Bengal, and an establishment conducted on principles that would have been entirely acceptable to all those Mahommedans who now, on religious and other grounds, feel themselves unable to take advantage of our State schools, and are therefore unable to compete on equal terms with their Hindoo rivals. And now for a brief outline of this particular wrong.

It appears that in 1806 a wealthy Mahommedan gentleman, of Hugli district, died, leaving a vast estate for pious uses. In consequence of a quarrel between the Musalman trustees, they were both dismissed by Government, which assumed the management of the estate, appointing itself in the place of one trustee and nominating a second one.

Now, the Government thought fit to apply the trust to educational purposes, and there can be no doubt that as a college for poor scholars has always been considered a pious use in Musalman countries, it was perfectly proper to apply the estate to such a purpose. But there can be as little doubt that to apply the funds to a non-Mahommedan college would have been deemed an act of gross impiety by the testator. You can imagine then, my dear John, with what feelings the Mahommedan community learned that the trust was to be applied for the endowment of an English college—when they learned that an estate left for the pious uses of Islam was to be devoted to founding an institution subversive in its very principles to Islam. "At this moment," to use the words of Mr. Hunter, "the head of the college is an English gentleman, ignorant of a single word of Persian or Arabic, who draws £1,500 a-year from a strictly Mahommedan endowment for teaching things hateful to every Musulman." And, though it only made the malversation more glaring, to cloak this gross piece of injustice, it only remains to add that a little Mahommedan school was attached to the college. The Musalman community, I need hardly add, look upon the whole thing as a swindle from first to last. They complain that the Government took advantage of a quarrel between the

Musalman trustees to seize their largest religious endowment, and apply it to the building of an institution which is of such little service to them that out of three hundred boys, some years ago, only three were Mahommedans. No wonder that a civilian (quoted by Mr. Hunter) who has studied the matter deeply, says that "it is difficult to over-estimate the odium, not to say contempt, which the British Government has incurred by its action in this case."

And here, my dear John, I feel sure that you will excuse my observing that this story adds further confirmation (if any indeed is needed) to what I said in my last letter, where it was pointed out that whenever politicians, statesmen, or by whatever name we may choose to call the governors of men, are left to follow their own devices, and are entirely uncontrolled by public opinion, they invariably prove themselves a very mischievous class of persons. And, in this particular instance, your agents have not only perpetrated an act of gross injustice, but committed a political blunder, the effects of which, considering the discontented and depressed condition of the Musalman population, it is impossible to exaggerate. And the worst of it is, that when these blunders are once made they can only be partially undone. In common honesty, we ought to hand

over the whole trust to Mahommedan trustees, to be spent by them in some way that would have met the intentions of the testator. But if we did so, it is plain that our enemies would say that we first of all committed a robbery, and then made restitution out of sheer fear of the resentment of the Musalman community. Nevertheless, there can be no doubt as to what our course should be. We should make restitution, and trust to time to bring the Musalmans to a right interpretation of our motives. Supposing, however, we did this, and supposing further that we made such provision in our minor schools as would make education palatable to the Musalmans, and so give them a chance of competing on equal terms with the Hindoos, the question still remains, would the Musalmans be any better satisfied with our rule than they were before? In my humble opinion, they would simply become more dissatisfied than ever; and if you will only give me a few minutes more, I will undertake to show you how that must naturally come to pass.

In the early part of our conversation, you will remember, I observed that the Mahommedans had some special wrongs, and what these are we have seen. I also observed that they are no doubt suffering from some great and crying wrongs, but that these wrongs are only those they share in

common with all the foremost races in India. Well, these wrongs are simply that the peoples of India have not only no share, or even the smallest voice, in the administration, but that they are debarred from rising to honourable posts in the military and civil services of the State. These are indeed the crying wrongs that Hindoo and Musalman alike suffer from, and alike feel; and it requires but a very small amount of reflection to perceive that if you provide the peoples of India with an advanced education, and do not take measures to satisfy the desires that education naturally brings along with it, the end of these people will be worse than what it is at present, for the simple reason that they will be more conscious of their thraldom than ever they were before. This must happen even with the educated Hindoos, who at present are tolerably well contented with our rule; and I leave you to imagine how much more so it must be with the proud and intolerant Mahommedan, who, the more he knows, will naturally, and, I venture to say rightly, become the more thoroughly disaffected towards a Government which denies him all chance of honourable distinction in the State, and prevents him from having the smallest share in the direction of affairs. Even already has education been productive of some evil; and this was pointed out only

the other day by a gentleman of large Indian experience.* He tells us that there are numerous competitors for Government posts, and that those who fail are discontented because they cannot find any other means of subsistence. The same writer is also of opinion that these discontented men, having just superficial knowledge enough to lead others astray, may become active agents of disaffection. "It is daily becoming more difficult for English employés," he continues, "to preserve their ascendancy, while the time has not yet arrived when the Government can rely implicitly on the good-will and unfaltering allegiance of its native subjects." The fact is, my dear John, that your agents are rapidly floating into a sea of trouble, through which it will require the wariest steering, and real statesmanlike forethought, to guide the vessel of the State. If they will only recognise their coming difficulties in time, they need have little fear for the future; but if they think they can educate the peoples of India, and still keep them in their present state of thraldom, a revolution will surely arise, which will task all the resources of England, and render India such a costly possession that we shall be glad to make it over to any Power that will undertake to repay the hundreds of millions that Englishmen have

* Vide Bowring's *Eastern Experiences*. King & Co., London.

advanced on the security of Indian revenues. If, however, timely reforms be initiated—if you will resolutely resolve to manage the country without worrying the people and imposing taxes they are alike unwilling and unable to bear—if you will admit the educated classes to a fair share of honourable positions in the public service, and if, finally, you will initiate a set of consultative councils so constituted as to develop gradually into a genuine representation of the people, I see no reason why what has so often been called "the brightest jewel in the British crown" should not become so in reality, and remain so for many a century to come.

THE NEW HINDOO THEISM.

ON the morning of the 5th of June, 1870, I betook myself to South Place Chapel, Finsbury, being attracted thither by an advertisement which put forth that Baboo Keshub Chunder Sen, the Hindoo Reformer, would there preach and pray. The place was small; a range of pews there was on either side of the aisle leading to the pulpit, and another set under the gallery, which ran round the sides of the building. An orthodox organ there also was, and moreover the orthodox want of ventilation which curses most of our buildings in London. A considerable congregation—many of whom, by the way, kept their hats on, and most of whom were talking in barely subdued tones—had already assembled. I was fortunate enough, however, to find a place, and only a few pews distant from the pulpit. My seat was next the door, and on my right was a woman who might be called young, if a probable age of nine-

and-twenty falls within that description. On her right, again, was a middle-aged, approaching to elderly, woman, probably the mother of the young woman aforesaid. I judged them both to be of the small shopkeeper class, and my subsequent conversation confirmed this opinion. To go to a Dissenting chapel, and take advantage of the time before the arrival of the minister to fall into conversation with one's neighbour for the time being may seem curious, but to the real vagabond it is extremely natural. Strangers for him can hardly be said to exist; then he has long ago acquired the knack of falling readily into conversation with people wherever he goes, knows well how to make an opening without thrusting, and readily takes advantage of the smallest crevice which may lead to the object he has in view. In this instance an opportunity soon occurred. The young woman dropped her parasol. I picked it up, and in handing it to her, asked when the service was going to commence. This easily led to a sort of general talk, in which the elder woman joined occasionally. They told me that they were Unitarians; and on my asking the younger woman what the South Place Chapel folks were, she said, "Oh! they go far beyond us;" on which the elder woman said she thought they went a good deal too far. Then we talked about James Martineau;

then about Miss Harriet; finally we got to talking about the Devil. With reference to him my young friend made a remark which to me at least was new. "Poor Devil," she said, quite naturally and simply, "I dare say he often gets accused of many things he never had a hand in." But what surprised me still more was the remark she made regarding the present appearance of the Hindoo Reformer, who just then made his appearance, and climbed the corkscrew stairs which terminated at the pulpit door. "How handsome he is!" said my friend with bated breath, and regarding him with undisguised admiration. Here our talk terminated, and the service commenced.

First of all we had a prayer, then a hymn, if I recollect right, and then the sermon. About the praying and singing throughout there was nothing remarkable, except that at one period of the service we were requested to kneel with Chunder Sen and employ some minutes in solemn and silent contemplation of God. The sermon however was, in its way, somewhat remarkable; not that it contained anything new in principle, but the quotations made from the scriptural books of so many religions could not fail to interest the hearers. The object of the preacher was to show how all the best religions were at one in essentials, and how religion is the natural birthright of man—

something that he is as much bound to develop as he is bound to develop all the concomitants of advanced and advancing life. Having this object in view, he read out, in the first instance, texts from the Hindoo, Mahommedan, Parsee, Jewish, and Christian Scriptures, and then proceeded to say that the more he examined these religions the more similarity of teaching he found in them. Quoting that beautiful and tolerant text from the Hindoo Scriptures which declares that "As the bee gathereth honey from all flowers, so do the wise gather good from all things and all religions," he went on to point out that truth is not a monopoly, but something that is evenly distributed. Any man, he said, can have it, and it is not peculiar to any sect. The germs of all spiritual truths are inherent in the human mind, and from all nations there is a unanimous response. Just as a pound is a pound, wherever you get it from, so from whence you get your moral truths does not signify. In religious books, he said, you will find the chaff of the mind of man mixed up with the great truths which are common property. From what I have already given, the reader may easily imagine the rest of the sermon, but it may be worth while quoting here a few of those texts which I took down at the time. Of those from the Hindoo Scriptures, the following seemed to me

most interesting: "When an enemy comes to your house, show him hospitality, for the tree does not deny its shade even to the man who fells it. Conquer anger with forbearance, conquer malevolence with benevolence and patience, conquer their unrighteousness with righteousness. The householder should perform everything to the glory of God. Not to intelligence nor to too much speaking, but to a true worshipper does God reveal himself." Of the Mahommedan texts the one which declares that "He who resigneth himself to God, and does what is right, shall be saved," seems certainly brief and practical. From the Parsee texts I only noted the following prayer: "In prayer we rejoice—on prayer we fall. All that I have done and not done, pardon, I repent. Pardon all that men have committed because of me, and that I have committed because of them." One important omission he made, and I could not help thinking it a singular circumstance that no mention was made of the religion of Bhuddha.

But it is time now to ask what it was that Chunder Sen wished his audience to do. Well, shortly he appealed to them to reject all sectarianism whatever, confine themselves to the worship of the one God, and reject anything and everything that clashed with their natural-born intuitions. He subsequently complained that people were

under the idea that the God he preached was a mere abstraction; but, urged Chunder Sen, "the God of the Hindoos is not an abstraction, but the Regulator of the events of the universe." And between us and that Regulator there was to be no human or deified personage whatever. But in all this there was one thing untouched upon, one question unasked, and it is this: Does there exist a people in the world who can contemplate without uneasiness the idea of going into the presence of God unsupported by some friendly hand, or who are contented to live without the idea of there being some intermediate personage or Deity between them and the first great Cause? Has Chunder Sen ever asked himself this? He evidently sees very clearly that a certain number of highly-educated strong-minded men can thus, as it were, venture to stand alone in the presence of God; but he looks no further, or he must have seen with equal clearness that the time has not yet come, that civilisation and knowledge have not yet been sufficiently extended, and that, therefore, doctrines like his, wanting that life which the age demands, can never, at least for many generations to come, progress beyond a very limited section of the population. Is not the proof of the pudding in the eating of it; and is not this homely proverb as true of religions as of anything else?

If Chunder Sen will only look at the two great religions of the world—Christianity and Bhuddhism —he must recognise the practical importance of some intermediate deified personage which shall supply that want Socrates and Alcibiades felt more than two thousand years ago, when they talked of the need of some inspired messenger from above who should show men how to pray, and how to make themselves acceptable to God. The masses of mankind feel that want now as much as it was felt then, and having once found a means of gratifying it, slow indeed will they be in yielding it up.

On a former occasion I had had an opportunity of hearing Chunder Sen, when he first arrived in England, and a large welcome meeting was held at the Hanover Square Rooms on the 12th of April; and, as what I heard and saw there on that day may be of interest, I purpose giving some account of his reception, and of what was said by the various speakers who spoke on the occasion. When I entered the Rooms a large audience had already assembled, and the platform, too, was equally well filled. But the latter might have been even fuller, had all those attended who sent letters of excuse. First of all spoke the Dean of Westminster, who moved "That this meeting, composed of members of nearly all Protestant

Churches, offers a hearty welcome to Baboo Keshub Chunder Sen, the distinguished religious reformer of India, and assures him and his fellow-labourers of its sympathy with them in their great and praiseworthy work of abolishing idolatry, breaking down caste, and diffusing a higher moral and intellectual life amongst the people of that vast empire." The Dean then spoke at some length, and dwelt upon the common ground we all stood upon in religious matters. Subsequently he pointed out the immense advantages that had been gained in establishing a common point of contact, as from this point an advance might be most easily made in the direction of Christianity. He afterwards dwelt upon the action of the Apostles in this respect, and told his audience how St. Paul at Lystra addressed himself to the natural conscience of the Lycaonian tribes, and at Athens to the altar of the unknown God, and to the verses of the heathen poets. He also showed how the great Roman Pontiff, who sent missionaries to convert our Anglo-Saxon forefathers, entreated them to proceed by gradual steps; and how another Pontiff, still more eminent, when he sent his missionaries to found the Church of Northern Germany, implored them, in the words of their Master, not to pour new wine too hastily into old bottles. Wise words these, and words

that show us how speedily we ought to reverse that Indian mission policy which is vainly seeking to reproduce those paltry sectarian differences which are made so much of in England. Amongst so much that was good it may seem fastidious to notice a remark which, from its incorrectness, could not fail to strike any one acquainted with the history of Eastern religions. He observed that "it was always said to be one of the most striking proofs of the heavenly origin of our religion, that, having sprung from the East, it was able to conquer and assimilate the West." This may be so, but the remark, if at all warrantable, is as applicable to the religion of Bhuddha which, like Christianity, was born in one country and accepted in another, the only difference being that it was born in the West and accepted in countries lying to the north and east.*

* It is surprising to observe the ignorance that exists amongst our clergy regarding the religions of Asia, and I may mention that I once heard a fashionable West-End preacher tell his audience that till Christ came on the earth there was neither knowledge nor hope of a future state. Such a state he said was but seldom alluded to in the Old Testament, and the ancients had neither knowledge nor belief on the subject. It is certain, however, that the Hindoos looked forward to the happy reunion of families in a future state, and this too long before the advent of Christ. There are some excellent remarks on the subject of this ignorance of our missionaries in India in the letters of a converted Brahmin, which appeared in *Mission Life* about two years ago; and the writer shows how ridiculous we often make ourselves by preaching, as something new, those religious developments which are the natural heritage of man.

After the Dean spoke Lord Lawrence, who gave some account of Chunder Sen's descent, and informed the audience that he was of the physicians' caste. Then we had an effective speech from the Rev. James Martineau, who thought that the noble lesson read to them by this Indian reformer was destined to react upon themselves. "Many a time," continued the speaker, "had the divine interpretation of the world—many a time had successive religions come to the West from the East, and he believed it was destined to be so again. The European mind," he said, "had a certain hardness in it, in virtue of which intellectual force was gained at the expense of spiritual depth; and the larger the scientific universe became, the more did it shut us up in a materialistic prison, and disqualify us from passing from the bases of things to their Divine Cause. With the Indian genius, he ventured to think, it would be otherwise. It could absorb science without sacrificing many an element which we had lost. With subtler thought and gentler affections it could go behind the phenomena that stop our way, and bring back the flood of divine light upon the world." Well, at any rate, it is as well to think so! But while we are balancing the probabilities of the case a missionary of twenty years' Calcutta standing takes up the tale. In the speech he

made there was little calling for special remark, except that the speaker had, it appears, often joined the Brahmo Somaj worship—an act of toleration which no doubt astonished some of the audience. After the missionary came a Jewish clergyman, who created some merriment by observing that, now that he looked at the resolution again, it seemed that no place had been left for a Jew in it, seeing that only the members of Protestant Churches had been mentioned. His speech was short and to the point. He adverted to the encouraging fact of so many various sects being brought together for a common purpose, and said that he was almost inclined to throw himself back upon what his Jewish fathers ages ago set forth as an evidence of the coming of the Messiah —"when men should be more attracted to those things on which they might agree in common, than repulsed by those on which they honestly differ." Having thus got through the preliminary speakers, we come at last to the Lion.

Baboo Keshub Chunder Sen is a man of middle height, square build, and, for a native of India, if we except the very lowest castes, extremely dark. He appears to be about thirty years old, and his countenance is pleasing and intelligent. His command of English is wonderful, and his pronunciation excellent, though he pronounced his

R's more markedly than we do. His voice is powerful, and his delivery fluent. Altogether he may be said to have the capabilities of a popular preacher. On this occasion he spoke at great length—too great length I thought—and he hardly seemed to know where to stop. To give an account here of all that he said would of course be impossible, but I may be allowed to glance at a few of the most notable points in his speech.

Chunder Sen commenced by telling his audience the object of his journey to England. It was not, he said, to make money, nor to gratify mere idle curiosity; but to fulfil a sacred mission—to tell the English people what their race had been doing in India, and to convey to them the heart-felt thanks of one hundred and eighty millions of his countrymen for the great work they had commenced and carried out there. This statement seemed pretty well for a beginning, but what was really extraordinary was the fact that the audience seemed thoroughly to believe it; and what was more extraordinary still, was that Chunder Sen evidently believed it himself. Having thus established this very satisfactory base (which, as we shall afterwards see, was without any foundation whatever), the speech flowed on fluently enough; and when it was announced that the Lord in his mercy had sent out the British nation to rescue India, loud were

the cheers that followed. Some further statements of Chunder Sen's belief in the doctrine of God in history, and an allusion to the special agency employed by God to elevate and exalt the natives, were also much cheered; and when it was stated that the people of India and England were both politically and intellectually united, the satisfaction of the audience burst forth anew. The statements, too, that followed seemed equally agreeable; and pleasant it was to hear that "on all sides the inexhaustible physical resources of the country are being developed," and that "although India is rich, and has made many rich, there is a great future before her of vast material prosperity and aggrandisement." India had also been active as regards social reformation, and caste, her great curse, had already commenced to vanish before English ideas and English education. But the greatest achievement of all, he observed, was the religious and moral reformation of his country, and here he commenced talking about the Bible. That wonderful book, he said, has been received and studied, and in many cases appreciated, by the educated classes of India. Whatever their religious denominations may be, whatever their peculiar prejudices, he could confidently say that, if any of his countrymen felt a hungering and thirsting after spiritual comfort,

they must now and then open the pages of the Bible. The spirit of that book, and the spirit of Christ, would, he took upon himself to say, be one day received in India. But he could not say the same of any of the various doctrines, ceremonies, and rituals existing amongst those who called themselves Christians. "Leave us to ourselves," said Chunder Sen, "and let us study the Bible." Then he went on to praise the missionaries, and to tell his hearers how they had been instrumental in infusing a large amount of spiritual influence throughout the length and breadth of the land. After this, Chunder Sen told shortly and simply the history of his own sect, and how it gradually rose to that pure Theism which he hopes will one day cover the earth as the waters cover the sea.

The Brahmo Somaj, or the Hindoo Monotheistic Church, was founded by the well-known Ram Mohun Roy, whose sole object was to revive the primitive Hindoo religion. This work he commenced, and, in spite of persecution and threats of excommunication, laid firm the foundations of the new Church. Shortly afterwards he came to England, where he died. In consequence of his untimely death, the reformation suffered a temporary collapse; but it subsequently received fresh impetus, and since then the progress of the sect has

continued, and been attended with a fair amount of success. The original object of the sect was simply to restore Hindooism to its primitive state of purity; to do away with idolatry and superstition, and caste if possible; and to declare the pure monotheistic worship prescribed in the Vedas as opposed to the idolatrous teaching of the Puranas, or the later Hindoo religious books. But the successors of Ram Mohun Roy unfortunately maintained the infallibility of the Vedas. Now, these ancient scriptures contain, and clearly inculcate, the doctrines which Chunder Sen has adopted; but, though they contain the purest religious truths, it was made perfectly clear, after a long and patient examination, that they could not be held to be infallible, because they contained also some of the worst forms of nature-worship, and some absurd doctrines and ritual. When these facts came to light, a split at once took place, and a considerable number of the sect, throwing the Vedas finally aside, took up the bolder position of pure Theists. Of these reformers of reformers, as we may call them, Chunder Sen is one, and he may be said to be the leading representative of the most advanced section of the religious reforming party in India. But this is far from being the whole, and these Theists declare themselves as social reformers too, and, to use the words of

Chunder Sen, it is the aim of the sect "to assume an aggressive attitude towards all manner of evil rampant in the land." But of all these evils we find that those social distinctions which make up what is known by the term caste are most loudly inveighed against in his opening address to the people of England. "Let us give India," said Chunder Sen, "universal brotherhood, which shall not recognise the distinctions of caste at all." And the Hindoo reformer came here prepared to find in this free and happy country no such thing as caste. But the longer he remained the more his eyes were opened to the fact that, amongst the very English whom he had heard in India denouncing this institution as an abomination, caste in all its social tyranny reigned supreme. At St. James's Hall we hear him denouncing idolatry, superstition, and caste all in one breath, as things that were necessarily bound up together, and upon all of which his sect was bound to wage war. When, however, we turn to his farewell speech, we find that he has been undeceived, and in enumerating the evils he had noticed during his English visit, he said: "I was also pained to notice an institution I did not expect to find in this country—I mean caste. Your rich people are really Brahmins, and your poor people Sudras. I thought caste peculiar to India. Certainly, in a religious sense it is; but as a social

institution it perpetrates prodigious havoc in this country."

At first sight it may seem somewhat remarkable that the principal religious reformations of India should all have been prominently marked by attacks on caste. The Bhuddhist exclaimed and preached against it, proclaiming loudly the fraternity of man. When the Seik religion was started, caste was summarily abolished, or, at least, assumed to be abolished; and in this last reformation, too we fine the same cry. But all these cries are either dreams or party-cries. The fact is that, in starting a new religion, no rapid progress can be made without something to fight with or fight for. Nor is it at all necessary that the object should be real or readily attainable; let it only be soothing, and it will suffice. The idea of pulling down those in high places, and reducing them to the social level of the masses, is sure to prove a welcome signal, and appease for the moment the vanity of the multitude. Hence, whether consciously or unconsciously on the part of the originators of Indian religious reforms, no cry has been used with greater effect than that which proclaims the reign of socialism. In strict accordance, then, with the spirit of religious reformation most likely to be popular, does Chunder Sen condemn caste to a speedy and final extinction. And

here it is impossible to avoid indulging in some vain regrets that a man so prominent as this should have joined in the indiscriminate censure of an institution which, with all its occasional absurdities and inconveniences, has so much good about it. It was only the other day that I was speaking to a native of India on this subject. He expressed himself as a strong opponent to caste laws. I then pointed to our records of crime, and to the statements of our physicians, and showed him how many murders, how much crime, disease, poverty, and misery was caused by drinking; and called his attention to the fact that caste, which prohibited most of the respectable classes in India from using alcohol at all, had been of immeasurable advantage in preventing a host of evils that we suffered from here. That caste has thus been of great service he freely admitted. Then why, I asked, cannot you reform and improve your institutions instead of pulling them to pieces and throwing away the good and bad parts of them together? "Well, the fact is," he said, "we are in a whirlpool. We are like children, and you have poured in upon us a mass of knowledge that is perfectly bewildering." The result of all this is that the educated, or rather, I should say, the instructed Indians, have been carried clean off their feet. Everything Indian must be bad, and everything their new masters do

and say must be right. And the result of all this is that the foremost natives, instead of forming sound opinions as regards the valuable portion of their institutions, are setting to work to imitate our social life, and have commenced to pour new wine into old bottles with a vengeance. The most sensible portions of the native community, however, are already, I believe, beginning to discover that many of their countrymen are going too fast, and we may hope before many years are over to find the natives thinking for themselves instead of being guided like a pack of children. On no question probably do they require to do so more than on the question of caste, which it has become the fashion to laugh at as a relic of barbarous times. Many of its customs, as I have said before, are absurd; but, as a great temperance society, as an encouragement of abstemiousness, and as thence a guardian of public morals, it cannot be too carefully cherished. It is melancholy, I may go a little out of my way to add, to find that learning English and learning to drink, are fast becoming exchangeable terms. In allusion to this, the native gentleman just alluded to said that the Hindoo parent has often to ask himself, "Shall I keep my son at home, and only partially educate him, or shall I send him to schools and colleges where he will probably learn to drink?" "And," said my

native friend, "he often prefers the first alternative."

And now for a few observations on some of those remarkable statements made by the Indian reformer during his speech at St. James's Hall. What truth was there, to commence with, in the statement that a hundred and eighty millions, or even one million, of Chunder Sen's countrymen had any desire that their heartfelt thanks should be conveyed to the people of England for the great work they had been engaged in carrying out in India? Well, shortly and simply, the statement was as contrary to the truth as any statement could be, the fact being that the people of India were never more discontented than they have been of late years. As little truth, perhaps, was there in the assertion that God had employed the English as a special agency to elevate and exalt the natives, and that India and England are intellectually united. But all these were mere trifles compared with the assertion that while India is already rich, there is a great future before it of vast material prosperity and aggrandisement. Of all the mischievous delusions that were ever fostered by the ignorance of man this is probably the greatest, because it is mainly owing to a blind belief in the wealth of India, and the vast material prosperity which she is destined to develop—it is mainly owing to these

delusions that India has been reduced to the verge of bankruptcy; it is owing to them that a system of profuse expenditure has been encouraged, that an increase of taxation has been brought about which has borne heavily on the greatest necessity of life, and that the peoples of India have become thoroughly discontented. But it is now universally acknowledged by those who have paid the smallest attention to the subject, that India, so far from being rich, is the poorest and most-heavily taxed country in the world, and is suffering from such an enormous annual depletion of cash to this country (variously estimated at from twelve to sixteen millions a year), that Chunder Sen's great future of material prosperity is simply an impossibility, if we continue to hold India and govern it as we do at present. Finally, when Chunder Sen said that the greatest achievement of all had been the religious and moral reformation of the country, he was equally wide of the truth. The tendency of our education is simply to make the Hindoos entirely irreligious — *i.e.* they abandon their own form of religion and adopt no other. Then as to the moral reformation he speaks of, it is certain that every branch of morality has become worse under our administration, and of this fact we have such strong testimony from various quarters, that I need not trouble the reader with evidence in sup-

port of such a well-known fact. Chunder Sen himself, in one of his subsequent addresses, draws a picture of the spread of drinking, and the ruin caused by it, which amply shows that the moral reformation of his countrymen has commenced in a manner more likely to add to the fortunes of publicans than the peace of families. It only remains to say, that after six months' stay Chunder Sen returned to his country. To use his own words: "The result of my visit to England is that, as I came here an Indian, I go back a confirmed Indian; I came here a Theist, I go back a confirmed Theist."

Some remarks on the political significance of the rise of this sect, and we have done. That the rise of such a sect should have any political significance has never, that I am aware of, occurred to any of the numerous writers on India. Nor have we far to go for a reason for this. It lies simply in the fact that Indian affairs are entirely neglected in this country, so entirely neglected that you cannot get any section of the public to pay the smallest attention to them. The consequence of this is, that while in this country there are thousands of able minds employed in the questions of the hour, in forecasting events, and in keeping a good look-out ahead, there are no such minds at work on Indian affairs. And hence it arises that the officials in

charge of India, taken up as they are with the exigencies of the hour, blunder into difficulties, till some day arises when the Government is astonished to find itself either fast in a quagmire or sitting close upon the edge of a volcano. Our last great difficulty was the volcano which exploded in 1857, our present one is a quagmire of financial difficulties, with a worse volcano in the distance. And this last great volcano is already in sight. To use the words of Lord Napier of Magdala, there probably never was a time when we could rely less upon the affections of the people. Of the truth of this I am afraid there can be no doubt, and if we could be satisfied that the feelings of the people are not more actively hostile than his words would lead one to suppose, we might consider ourselves fortunate. But, to say the least, it is pretty certain that the people are tired of our worrying Government, and I cannot but look upon it as a singularly unfortunate circumstance that, at such a conjuncture, the spirit which has resulted in the Brahmo Somaj should be rapidly extending. That spirit is an inquisitorial and sceptical spirit. Its first step has been to march to the attack of Hindoo religious institutions, its second will be to march on to a consideration of the justice of our Government in India.

And here, for the benefit of those who have had

neither time nor inclination to think on such subjects, it may be as well to make some remarks on the fact of the spirit of religious enquiry being naturally followed by an enquiry into the policy of the State; or, in other words, on the fact of a religious rebellion being generally followed, where the need and opportunity exists, by a social rebellion. Nor have we very far to go for illustrations of this natural sequence. We have one in our own English history, a second in the history of our nearest neighbours. The briefest allusions to both will suffice for my purpose here. As for the first, the reader will remember that the early Reformers insisted much on the right of private judgment; that the right of private judgment upset the Church; and that in England the same spirit which produced the Puritans induced the Puritans to war against and overturn the Government. And Clarendon, it may be added, notices in one closely packed sentence, the connection between "a proud and venomous dislike against the discipline of the Church of England, and so by degrees (as the progress is very natural) an equal irreverence to the government of the State too." In France, too, the spirit which produced religious scepticism proved equally troublesome to the State. These mere allusions are perhaps sufficient to indicate the necessary connection that exists be-

tween reform in religion and reform in the government of a country.

Having thus seen, from the facts already given, that an attack on the religious institutions of a country means a great deal more than might at first sight be supposed, we shall have little hesitation in admitting that the rise of the Brahmo Somaj is an indication which we should speedily recognise the importance of, with the view of bringing our Government into harmony with those aspirations and feelings which already exist amongst a limited class of the people, and which are spreading at such a rate as must inevitably prove speedily fatal to our present system of Indian administration. To a superficial observer our most formidable enemies in India appear to be the Wahabis and Mahommedans, but in reality these people are as chaff compared to that spirit of which the new Theism is the living fruit. The Mahommedans, though no doubt capable of much mischief, are numerically insignificant; and the *casus belli* of the section of them most likely to be troublesome is founded, not so much on a feeling of just indignation at being kept in a state of thraldom, as on a desire for blood and plunder, and a fanatical wish to assert a religious supremacy. With the Hindoos the case is widely different. They are in an overwhelming majority; and when

the spirit which produced the Brahmo Somaj turns its attention to the affairs of the State—when its members, amply educated and entirely unprovided for, spread amongst the people and communicate to them the intelligence of the freedom enjoyed in England—when they point to the fact that the Indian has no share or voice in the administration, nor the smallest control of the public purse, and that the honourable offices of Government are devoured by foreigners, to the exclusion of the natives of the country—when they point out that India is annually undergoing an enormous depletion of solid money, which is taken from the soil to be spent in England—when they point to the fact that the people are taxed more heavily than any people in the world—when, finally, they show that this is only necessary because the country is obliged to support an enormous foreign army and an expensive alien Government—when all these things are made known, as one day they assuredly will be, there will arise a deep-seated feeling of universal hatred, which will surely make itself felt. Out of the struggle we should, no doubt, come successful; but we should not the less be losers, for we should rise up from the game nearly, if not quite bankrupt. Nor, on the other hand, should we be much better off if we had yielded to pressure in the first instance. Were we even weak enough

to yield to threats, or what had the appearance of threats, demand would follow demand, till the power and profit alike slipped from our grasp, and the country became not worth having.

And is there no way out of all this? Undoubtedly there is a way—a course by which the people could be got to like us, or, at least to appreciate the value of our services, and which, when the day of separation came, would enable us to leave the country without loss of money or honour, and on good terms with its numerous peoples. But the plans by which this may be brought about cannot be satisfactorily discussed at the end of a paper like this, and must therefore be reserved for some more fitting occasion.

I regret to find that, as regards a portion of the remarks on the Brahmo Somaj, my meaning has been misunderstood by at least one person who is interested in the progress of that sect. It seems to have been thought that because I said that it was an unfortunate thing for our Government that in the present state of affairs the spirit that has produced the Brahmo Somaj should be rapidly extending, I meant, therefore, to call in question the purity of the motives of the sect. Now nothing could have been farther from my intention. In fact were it not for the pure motives and zeal of the sect it could never rise to any importance. To

use the words of Mr. James Freeman Clarke,* "the reward of patient, long-enduring faith is influence; with this influence ambition serves itself for its own purpose. Such is, more or less, the history of every religion, and, indeed, of every party. Sects are founded, not by politicians, but by men of faith, by men to whom ideas are realities, by men who are willing to die for them. Such faith always triumphs at last; it makes a multitude of converts; it becomes a great power, the deep and strong convictions thus created are used by worldly men for their own purposes." But the main object of my remarks was to point to the signs of the rising of the intellectual tide. If our Government goes along with this tide, and provides an administration suited to the wishes and aspirations of the people, well and good; if not, it must eventually be so much the worse for the Government.

Ten Great Religions. By James Freeman Clarke. Boston: James R. Osgood & Co. 1871.

THE ASSASSINATION OF LORD MAYO.

THERE is no sure foundation set on blood. On blood was our Indian Empire founded—on the blood of the conquerors and the blood of the conquered—in blood must it be continued for many a year to come. We have shown the conquered that in the battle-field we do not care for our lives. There remains a greater, and we may well say, the greatest, test of courage. We must show that the English can also stand firm against the dread of assassination. We stand face to face with what, as far as we are concerned, is merely a new phase of Oriental life, and we must try and get used to it as best we can.

Let us look this matter straight in the face. When the terrible news was flashed to England people would not, or could not, do this. Men you met in the street and in the clubs, when they talked of the dreadful deed, looked grave—and men best acquainted with India looked very grave

indeed; but all alike put the matter aside, and seemed indisposed to say much about it. And this feeling was straightway reflected in the public journals. None of them ventured to speak out as to the main point—in fact, the main point has not as yet been once alluded to. One important journal kept silent for days after the arrival of the news, and when it at last spoke, it was rather to remark on the fact that the question has been universally shunned, than to offer any precise opinion on the political importance of the deed. Men, as we have said, talked of anything but the main point, while many betook themselves to that branch of the drivelling style which is popularly known as putting the best face on matters. Here the first sheep to jump the hurdle was Colonel Sykes, who, being a true representative of that old Indian type which resolutely shuts the eyes to danger, assured the House of Commons—as people assure women and children when a ship is sinking or a house on fire—that there was really no occasion for alarm, and that the deed had no political significance whatever. After Colonel Sykes came the leading journal, which strained every point to show that the assassin had nothing to do with our enemies. He was not employed by the Wahabis, nor was he the tool of a deliberate conspiracy; it was extremely doubtful

as to whether the deed was even an individual outburst of religious fanaticism. Adopting the picturesque rendering supplied by Major-General Taylor, the public were presented with the picture of Shere Ali "pining for the blue hills of Teerah, and brooding over his punishment for what he would persist in justifying as no crime." He was the Highland clansman of the olden time, who, for killing a rival in the course of a blood-feud, was doomed to rot for the remainder of his days in a Lowland gaol. He was a man weary of life, to whom no idea could be more natural than striking down the chief of his enemies when he had him in his power. After Colonel Sykes and the *Times* had spoken, the matter was of course considered to be at an end. Of all the London journals there was only one,* we believe, that had the wisdom and the courage to point out that, taking every point into consideration, it was not only most unlikely to be a deed committed on the spur of the moment, but that all the probabilities of the case were in favour of the murderer being the tool of the Wahabis.

But all this time it never seems to have occurred to the writers in the various journals to turn round and look at the matter from a native point of view. If they had done so for one moment, they must

* The *Asiatic*.

have seen that it did not matter where the man came from, or what his motives were, and that it was, practically speaking, of very slight importance whether the murder was owing to a wild impulse of the moment, or was the result of a deliberate conspiracy. Nothing that we can discover about it can alter the political consequences of the deed. Explain it how we may, the fact will still remain that a Governor-General of India not only can be, but has been assassinated, and that too by a man who, to all intents and purposes, is a native of India. Whether he was or was not a tool of the Wahabis, it is certain that they will assert him to have been so. They will point to him as one of their most eminent martyrs, who by striking one blow for the cause of the Faithful, had cut short a life of misery, and entered at one bound on a glorious inheritance, while the arrival of his victim at an obscure island will be pointed to as a miraculous interposition of Providence. "Again," it will be said, "has Allah arisen and stricken down the chief of our enemies;" and in many a Wahabi ditty, we may safely say, is the tale being already sung from house to house, and from village to village, from one end of India to the other. And all India will believe it. Even in the case of those who are best affected towards us, it is certain that they will

believe exactly what they like best to believe. We might discover beyond all doubt, that Lord Mayo's murderer had nothing to do with our enemies, and proclaim the fact from one end of India to the other, without being able to produce the smallest effect. Such a proclamation, indeed —supposing we were able to make it—would lead the natives to a conclusion the very opposite of that which we were desiring to establish. Looking then, this matter straight in the face, we are constrained to admit that this terrible deed, however it came to pass, must for all practical purposes be regarded as one the *consequences* of which cannot be lessened by anything we can possibly discover as to how it came about.

It was observed at the outset that there is no sure foundation set on blood. That difficulty one would have thought was quite enough to contend with; but we have in fact taken immense pains to rear on this bloody foundation an Empire which has destroyed the liberties of the people, reduced them to a political slavery complete in all its parts, and imposed on them taxes which are hateful because they are both new and burdensome, and because out of their collection there have arisen intolerable oppressions.* When it

* In a former paper (John's Indian Affairs, No. III., February number, *Fraser's Magazine*) it was observed that we had got back to the

is added that it is perfectly well known that the necessity for any such taxes has mainly arisen from a waste of public money, and often from a reckless extravagance,* the reader will then have

days of Warren Hastings, when the cry was, "Govern leniently, but get more money," or in other words, Be at once the father and oppressor of the people; but I now find that I have much understated the case, and that I should have said that we were rapidly getting back to the worst days of the Maharattas, the very report of whose approach spread consternation amongst the villagers. Pages of this Magazine could be filled with evidences of the bitter hatred caused of late years by action of the Government, but the following extract will sufficiently illustrate my meaning. The deputy-collector of Moorshedabad writes as follows: "The pitching of my tent at any place has sent consternation into neighbouring villages. 'There is an officer of Government come down among us,' the villagers reason; 'what can he come for but taxing us? They have hitherto exempted the poor, but they will now tax all alike.' This is very different," as the deputy-collector truly remarks, "from the spirit in which Government officers used to be received in former times." (Vide letter of *Times'* Calcutta Correspondent, published March 4, 1872.) This letter also proves that our officers have been made to appear as deliberate liars in the eyes of the natives.

* Numerous instances of extravagance have been given in former papers, but we hardly expect to be believed when we state that at the very time when wild dogs and jackals were tearing to pieces the moribund frames of British subjects who were perishing of famine by the road-sides, the Duke of Argyll not only allowed the Duke of Edinburgh to visit the East, but took out of the beggared Indian exchequer a considerable sum of money to defray the expenses of that tour, the fruits of which are now being exhibited at the South Kensington Museum. This may seem a trifling matter, but the tour had to be paid for out of taxes summarily levied in the middle of the year, and the result was that these were regarded as an arbitrary exaction for the benefit of his Royal Highness, and as far as the cost of the tour went this was undoubtedly true. While, however, we note

a complete idea both of the rotten state of the edifice and the insecurity of its foundation.

Keeping these facts plainly in mind, let us now ask what amount of political significance may be attached to this murder. We are afraid it must be conceded that, taking into consideration all the circumstances of our position in India, the deed must, in any case, be deemed of some importance; partly because it involves a considerable loss of our prestige, mainly because it must have enormously increased the hopes and prestige of an already too powerful sect. But while we plainly admit that the results likely to arise out of this entirely depend upon our own future course of action, we must also state our opinion that if we continue as at present to levy taxes which are obnoxious to the people, and continue to govern them in a way which is, in short, eminently unpopular—the example of the murder of Lord Mayo

such a blameable extravagance as this, it must be remembered that our extravagances generally have been honourable and praiseworthy in intention. In fact, such an amount of harm as we have done in India never could have been done by selfish men under similar circumstances. If these last do harm when invested with irresponsible power, good men invariably do ten times more. Narrow-minded, selfish men would have worked the country cheaply, let the people alone, and turned on plenty of water to add to the revenues. They would thus have had few famines, a full exchequer, and a contented people. What a series of famines and financial difficulties, and what boundless discontent, have our good men succeeded in producing!

will certainly continue to work upon the minds of every class of the community. It is ridiculous to suppose for one moment that we can conceal from the peoples of India that we *can* be influenced by a steady course of assassination and conspiracy. The India of to-day is not the India of twenty years ago, it is not even the India of five years ago. Railways and education have awakened the intelligence of the people, newspapers have enormously increased, communication with this country is now cheap and easy, and many natives come and go between India and England. We must therefore assume not only that most things are known, but that nothing can remain hid, and we must fearlessly and openly anticipate that tide of native thought and action which must come with awakened intelligence. We can no longer, as I have said, conceal from the people that we can be influenced by assassination and conspiracy; and as little can we conceal from them that we have already yielded to both in the case of people close to our own doors. All the educated Indians, all the influential classes of the community—we might almost say all those who have ears to hear and eyes to see—are perfectly well aware that the Irish Land Bill and Church Bill followed only after a long course of landlord shooting and Fenianism, and they will not be slow to conclude from the juxtaposition of

these circumstances that the surest way to be heard is a bloody one. In the event then of our continuing our present system of governing India, we may safely say that the assassination of Lord Mayo must be looked upon as a deed of the gravest political importance. If, on the other hand, we resolve to let the people alone for the future, keep far within our income, remit obnoxious and oppressive taxes, admit the upper classes to a fair share of employment in the public services, and show the people of India that we are starting them on the high road to eventually governing themselves—we may then dismiss from our minds the idea that any serious consequences are likely to arise out of this sad catastrophe.

There is yet another question that may be asked. Had the discontents which are known to exist all over India anything to do with the assassination of Lord Chief Justice Norman and Lord Mayo? To this it can only be answered, that it is impossible to say whether these discontents had or had not any direct bearing on the question. It may, however, be safely affirmed that the knowledge of the existence of these discontents, coupled with the knowledge of the fact that our financial difficulties are at their height, no doubt showed the disaffected that no better time could be selected for making some kind of attempt against us. They may not

have expected much active help, but they may at least have relied upon the sympathy of large numbers of the population. What but some such reliance on popular sympathy could have induced the Kookas to rise against us, and at a time, it must be remembered, when we had a splendid force within easy reach? But these are not the only signs of the times. We learn, from the most recent intelligence, that the Santhals have been holding meetings, and taking measures which seem calculated to excite strong suspicions as to their ultimate intentions. Even in the peaceful South a feeling of insubordination* has already shown itself, in a small way, it is true, but in the East we must beware of the cloud no bigger than a man's hand; and it seems worthy of notice that two officers were fallen upon lately by a mob at Trichinopoly, in the most unprovoked manner, and that the edge of a serious fracas was almost grazed. It is also worthy of notice, that in the cantonment of Bangalore English soldiers have been twice

* For the benefit of the English reader it may be well to note that this spirit of insubordination has been enormously increased owing to the discontented state of the English in India. The Government has in consequence been abused at every table; the knowledge of this has rapidly spread throughout the country, and the people naturally observe that it is high time for them to be discontented, if the English themselves are loud in their exclamations against the injustice of the Government.

attacked and ill treated by natives; and the *Madras Times* of February 10 gives us an instance of native insolence which might have led to something serious. On this occasion it appears that a Musalman came to one of our Engineers and asked for contract work, which the Engineer refused to give; the Musalman at once became insolent, and tried to persuade the contractors in active employ to strike work. He was ordered off, but would not go; and on the Engineer moving towards him attempted to draw his sword, but before he could effect his purpose he was knocked down, his sword, a pair of pistols, and a knife were taken from him, and he was forthwith handed over to the police. Threats of assassination have also made their appearance in the South of late years, and we were astonished to hear from a judge of our acquaintance that, in consequence of threatening letters, he had taken to having a loaded revolver at hand when he went to bed. For similar reasons a relative of this gentleman, in Northern India, never goes down to his court without a brace of revolvers concealed about his person, and it seems advisable that any one who has public duties to fulfil, should carry arms. It is impossible, of course, to say how common or how serious these threats of assassination may be, but another instance of the sending of threatening letters has only lately been brought to

the notice of the writer. To play with such a serious subject may seem rather ill-timed, but we cannot resist giving the following anecdote: A judge in Southern India, somewhat of a character in his way, once told the present writer that he sentenced a native to a long term of penal servitude, fifteen years I think; the moment the sentence was passed the prisoner said, "The first thing I'll do when I get out will be to murder you." "Well, all I can say is," said the judge, "that if I am such a fool as to be found in this country fifteen years hence, you are perfectly welcome to do so."

It is our intention presently to give a short account of Lord Mayo's life, and of the principal points connected with his government and untimely death; but before doing so, it may be as well, for the benefit of the general reader, to explain something that has been previously alluded to. It has been observed that our Empire has destroyed the liberties of the people, and reduced them to a political slavery complete in all its parts. To some it might have seemed more correct to say that we only supplanted the governing classes, and that the body of the people are no more enslaved to us than they were to their old masters. We therefore proceed to explain as briefly as possible how our rule has reduced all classes to an entire state of pupilage.

In former times there existed in India reigning powers that lived on the resources of the people; but though these powers levied taxes and waged war on each other at pleasure, the internal management of affairs was left to the village communities, and the people had the power of modifying their customs in accordance with what seemed to them to be expedient. Now this power we have entirely taken away from them; and not only have we done this; but we thrust our meddling noses into all the details of life, and refine here and reform there, *and always, it must be remembered, with increased and increasing taxation.* It still, however, remains to explain how we have deprived them of the power of modifying their customs; and this has been done simply by seizing on the existing customs as we found them, writing them down, and turning them into laws which the people have no power to alter in any way. And, to make matters as bad as they can be, where we have found gaps we have filled them up with a kind of law-stucco of express rules taken very much at haphazard from English law-books. The old right of communities of Hindoos have thus been entirely absorbed by our Government, which has now deprived the people of every particle of civic power. We need hardly add that the general action of our Government, even where to us it

seems most just, is to them simply hateful; and, in a collection of street songs lately made, life is declared to be intolerable now that the English have given women and boys the rights of men. We thus see, as was very clearly pointed out in Maine's *Village Communities* only the other day, that if the people have gained some benefits from us they have also lost others; and we need hardly add that the results of this entire depriyation of free action are altogether deadly and destructive to the very existence of the most valuable powers of man. On a future occasion this subject will be treated of at length, and our only reason for alluding to it here is because we conceive that we owe it to our readers to explain what we meant by saying that our Government had destroyed the liberties of the people.

And now it remains to give our readers a brief outline of Lord Mayo's life, of the principal features of his too short Indian reign, and of the circumstances connected with his untimely end.

Richard Southwell Bourke, Earl of Mayo (popularly known in India as "The Galloping Viceroy"), was the eldest of the seven sons of Robert, fifth Lord Mayo, and was born in the city of Dublin on the 21st of February, 1822, so that he was, at the time of his murder, within a few days of com-

pleting his fiftieth year. He was educated at Trinity College, Dublin, where he took his degree as Bachelor and Master of Arts in the regular course, and was created a Doctor of Laws in 1852. He entered Parliament in 1847, in the Conservative interest. Under Lord Derby's first administration, from March to December, 1852, he was Chief Secretary for Ireland. He also served in this capacity under Lord Derby's second administration in 1858, and for the third time in 1866. In his administration of Irish affairs he had shown considerable capacity for public business. He was a popular and influential member of the Lower House, but was unfortunate in having the reputation of being an indifferent and somewhat confused speaker. He was therefore little qualified to make a show. If, however, he was wanting in that ready utterance which may or may not accompany talent, but which is often mistaken for it, he was possessed of many qualities of infinitely greater value. He was filled with a strong determination to carry out with all his might the duties he had undertaken, he had a firm reliable nature, a sound judgment, a penetrating eye for character, a soul above prejudice or favour in selecting agents to serve the Government, a kindly heart, an open hand, a friendly manner to all about him. Add to these great activity of mind, and very great

vigour of body, and you have Lord Mayo. The circumstances of his appointment are too well known to require repetition here, and it is sufficient to say that after a visit to the minor Presidencies he assumed charge of the Supreme Government of India on the 12th of January, 1869.

To the general reader, whose acquaintance with the duties thrown upon Indian Viceroys is mainly gathered from the pictures of grand Durbars that appear from time to time in the *Illustrated London News*, it may appear that few posts could be more agreeable than that of a Governor-General of India. But whatever that position might have once been, it is certain that no office in the world could have been more critical and anxious than that which the new Viceroy had undertaken. He had indeed no insurrection to quell, nor any apprehension of one being at all likely immediately to occur; but he found himself confronted with difficulties which in all countries have either directly led to or accelerated the arrival of the most formidable revolutions that the world has ever seen. When we have said that these difficulties were financial ones, that they had become chronic, that the country was already dangerously overtaxed, and that there was a yawning deficit to fill up, we have said quite sufficient to show

that the situation was one of the gravest peril. And this deficit had to be dealt with either by borrowing more money or levying more taxes. In an evil hour he chose the latter alternative. The tax of all others most obnoxious and most oppressive was suddenly increased in the middle of the year. The salt taxes of Madras and Bombay were also suddenly increased (and this augmentation, by the way, made the *fifth* within the five years previous), and incomes from land and Indian-held securities which had been previously exempted from assessment under the license tax and certificate tax were also brought within reach of the tax-gatherer. But if Lord Mayo, in his haste to fill up the deficit, could see nothing but the deficit, there is ample reason for saying that he speedily saw his error, and that the responsibility for the continuance of obnoxious and perilous taxation rests at this moment with the Duke of Argyll, and has done so ever since October, 1870. And here we shall make no apology for going into this matter at some length, because the remarks we are now about to make not only clear Lord Mayo from the charge of obstinately maintaining dangerous and unjust taxes, but will for once, we believe, throw the blame on the right shoulders.

In the absence of any evidence to the contrary we have assumed that Lord Mayo was responsible

for the increase of obnoxious taxation that took place in the first year of his arrival in India. Let us now see what he had to say. On the 3rd of October, 1870, in his minutes on military expenditure, he wrote:—

"A feeling of discontent and dissatisfaction exists among every class, both European and native, on account of the constant increase of taxation which has for years been going on. My belief is that the continuance of that feeling is a political danger, the magnitude of which can hardly be over-estimated, and any sentiment of dissatisfaction which may exist among disbanded soldiers of the native army is as nothing in comparison with the state of general discontent to which I have referred. . . . . We can never depend for one moment on the continuance of general tranquillity; but I believe the present state of public feeling as regards taxation is more likely to lead to disturbance and discontent, and to be a source of greater danger than the partial reduction which we propose in the native army can ever occasion. Of the two evils I choose the lesser."

Now, we need hardly say that we have particular pleasure in quoting this statesmanlike minute, for it shows that what has been pointed to as the only vulnerable point in Lord Mayo's administration was in reality only a temporary one, and it shows further that he had firmly grasped the leading point of the situation, namely, that no danger in India can equal or even at all approach the danger of increasing an oppressive taxation. And here we feel sorely tempted to animadvert on the fact of the proposed reduction of the native army being vetoed, or at least not acted on,

and to show that the Duke of Argyll either has power over the destinies of India and has deplorably failed to use that power, or that in the event of his having no power his office should be abolished and his salary saved for the benefit of the poverty-stricken people of that distant empire. Between these propositions there can be no half-way house, and on some future occasion we purpose devoting some space to a consideration of the subject. It is sufficient here to have cleared Lord Mayo from a large portion of the blame that has hitherto been so unjustly cast on his memory.

And now we fear that we have left but little space to chronicle the particulars of the late Viceroy's reign. We have already noticed the principal feature in it, and a very few sentences will suffice to give the reader an outline of his general policy. And here we shall find nothing but matter for approval. His foreign policy was generally admitted to be sound and judicious. He supported Shere Ali on the throne of Cabul, entertained him as an equal, and showed that while he had much to gain from our good-will, he had nothing whatever to fear from us either in the way of aggression or invasion. Friendly relations were also maintained with the Nepaulese Court, and splendid Durbars upheld in the eyes

of the native chiefs the living signs of our paramount sovereignty in India. When we turn from foreign policy to the internal affairs of the Empire we find Lord Mayo active in matters of trade, commerce, mining, and railways, and showing an anxious desire to push forward those agricultural improvements which in all countries are of such vital importance. Amongst other matters of internal policy we may notice with satisfaction that the extravagant claims of the landholders of Bengal to be exempted from local and general taxation for educational and other purposes were firmly rejected. Almost his last official utterance may be read with pleasure, and confirms more than anything we could mention the character of the man. In this, his last official act we believe before sailing for the Andamans, he announced that the Government were determined that none of its subjects should suffer any civil losses from changing their religion, and declared that the disciples of the Brahmo Somaj school should have a law which should give them rights as full as any sect in India. And now we must hasten on to say something on Lord Mayo's fatal trip to the Andaman Islands, a brief account of which will probably not be unacceptable to our readers.

The Andaman Islands are situated in the Bay

of Bengal, in latitude 11° 41′ N., and 92° 42′ E. longitude, and for general purposes an idea of their position may be best gathered by stating that they lie about as far south in the bay as Madras, and at a distance of some two hundred and fifty miles from the coast of Burmah. They consist of three narrow islands running nearly due north and south. In length they cover a total extent of about one hundred and fifty miles, while they are seldom more than from twelve to fifteen miles in breadth. Port Blair is on the east coast of the southernmost isle, and is situated at the head of a fine inlet of the sea, forming a magnificent harbour nine miles in length. In this inlet or harbour there are three small islands, and these, together with nine places on the mainland, are used as convict stations, amongst which are distributed 17,500 convicts in all, including about 650 females. The islands, though presenting no very remarkable features of scenery, are beautifully wooded right down to the water's edge, and are diversified with broken ground and small hills, with some of larger dimensions at intervals. The highest of these is Mount Harriet, which is about 1,050 feet high, and it was on the top of this hill that Lord Mayo rested a while before setting out for the ship he was never destined to reach alive. On the whole islands there are only from 3,000

to 4,000 acres cultivated—mostly with vegetables —though it may be mentioned that there is a plantation of coffeé on Mount Harriet. The remainder of the islands consist of impenetrable jungle, swarming with birds, but boasting of nothing in the shape of animal life beyond rats, wild pigs, and cats. About the convict settlements there is nothing remarkable. There are the houses of the officers and men, the barracks of the convicts, the bazaars where vegetables and fruits are sold, and the shops kept by ticket-of-leave men, who deal in flannels, oilman's stores, glass, crockery, and such-like useful articles. It only remains to add that the climate is good, and the locality admirably suited for the detention of convicts, who, if they do make their escape by sea, are generally lost in attempting to reach the Burmah coast, while those who take to the jungle are speedily starved and easily recaptured.

As for the memorable event that happened at Port Blair on the evening of the 8th February, is it not familiar to all those who bear the English name? The Viceroy had visited the settlement, and as evening closed in ascended Mount Harriet, and sat there for about a quarter of an hour. He then set out for the pier with the view of going on board the man-of-war. As he reached the pier darkness set in—everything in short seemed to

favour the assassin, who sprang through the guard and stabbed the Viceroy twice in the back. He only uttered a few words after the fatal blow, and expired when on his way to the vessel. It is with a feeling of relief that we turn away from the details of this shocking calamity to enquire into the history and probable motives of the murderer.

The history of Shere Ali, Lord Mayo's murderer, is soon told. He is an Afreedee, his home being just beyond our border in the Teerah Mountains, west of the Kyber Passes, and in the territory of Cabul. He appears to have entered our service in 1857, and was sent to Hindostan with Meer Jafir's regiment. Being an Afreedee, it was a matter of course that he had a blood feud with a rival family. This feud he thought fit to prosecute in British territory; in short, he found one of his hereditary enemies in the suburbs of Peshawur, and could not resist the opportunity of endeavouring to restore that equilibrium of blood-letting which, rightly or wrongly, he conceived to have been destroyed at the expense of some of his kith and kin. Over the border this proceeding would have been quite allowable; on our side it was murder, and Shere Ali was accordingly tried, and, there being some presumption that the actual blow was struck by a comrade, was sentenced, not to death, but to trans-

portation for life to the Andaman Islands. According to Major-General Taylor, "he was not a mere brutal ruffian, as his last act would make him appear," and he certainly seems to have been fond of the children of General Taylor, under whom he was serving shortly before committing the deed for which he suffered transportation. But, notwithstanding this assurance, we must admit to having some doubts as to his amiability, after reading that he had previously fired at and wounded a woman across the border. A murder he had committed when quite a lad, seems, however, to have been strictly in accordance with etiquette; and if the other charge alluded to could be satisfactorily explained, we might agree with General Taylor in thinking that Shere Ali was at least no worse than his neighbours. And now we come to the question as to why Shere Ali murdered Lord Mayo. Was it to avenge himself on the personal enemy who had, by his signature, finally condemned him to a life-long imprisonment? Was it that he was weary of existence, and anxious to get to the gallows as fast as possible? Was it a case of pure and unprompted religious fanaticism? As to the first he had lived far too long under our law not to be aware that he owed his conviction to the judge, and not to the arbitrary order of the Vicêroy. As to the second he might have killed an Englishman

and gone straight to the gallows and paradise as soon as he liked. When we come to the third question we may say at once that if Shere Ali was animated by a religious hatred to strike down a Christian merely because he was a Christian, we see no reason why he should have waited all these years for the arrival of the very last Christian in the world that might have been expected to visit the Andaman Islands. After a very careful consideration, we have come to the conclusion that, being driven back on probabilities, as we necessarily are, the probabilities are entirely in favour of his being a tool—a willing tool we freely admit—of the Wahabis.

And now we are going to give our readers the outline of a story, full of interest, and containing in short all the favourite materials of romance. It is just one of those stories which are nowadays only to be found in the East—a marvellous tale of Asiatic art and English gullibility—a tale of conspiracy—of the arrest of the leaders of the conspiracy by a British officer at the most critical period of our Indian rule; of this officer carrying his district safely through the storm; of his disgrace after the storm was over, in consequence of the measures he had taken; of the liberation of conspirators and their being taken into the favour and employ of Government; of their ultimate de-

tection, conviction, and sentence; and of the restoration to favour of one of the native officials who aided us and was displaced along with his master. There yet, however, remains a part of the drama to be played out. The services of the officer alluded to have not yet been acknowledged, but this we have reason to think will soon be remedied, and the story be one day brought to a satisfactory conclusion. And this story is particularly worthy of record, because it affords an admirable illustration of our greatest danger in the East—the danger of the heads of Government being, for very obvious reasons, so averse to believe that things are wrong, that any officer who ventures to report unpalatable facts does so at the peril of his advancement in the public service. And this danger meets us at every turn. To this tendency, to shut the eyes to danger, a large proportion of the lives needlessly sacrificed in the Orissa famine may be traced; and even the Supreme Government was here obliged to point out, though in mild and gentle terms, that Sir Cecil Beaden's "incapacity to believe unfavourable reports" had induced the officers on the spot to send in soothing accounts of the nature of the crisis. To this tendency may be attributed the fact that when Government lately called for information on the working of the income tax, and when information was forwarded, which the Go-

vernment did not want to have, Sir William Muir and other officials were publicly accused "of exaggerating the evils alleged to be connected with the levy of the tax." To this fatal tendency it is owing that, no matter what the crisis may be in India, we never hear anything about it till we are in the midst of the breakers and the ship is just about to strike. It is owing to this that the Indian Finance Committee can hardly obtain any evidence worth having. "Do you suppose," said a civilian friend of the writer's only the other day, "that I am going to be such a fool as to appear before the committee and tell all I know about Indian affairs? Why a black mark would be put against my name, and I should never get the better of it." But to our story.

And here we must carry the reader back to the bitter trial of 1857, and ask him to set himself down in the city of Patna, which is situated on the Ganges, in the province of Bengal and some four hundred miles from Calcutta. To those who have heard anything of the Wahabis, the city is now well known as the head-quarters of the most troublesome and dangerous sect in India; but at the time of the mutinies few could be got to believe that the Wahabis were other than a harmless and industrious set of people who belonged to the most useful classes of the com-

munity. Now, the then commissioner of Patna soon came to the conclusion, by evidence derived from a variety of sources, but which, like most evidence procurable in cases of the kind, would not be received in a court of law, that this apparently peaceful sect were not only dangerous conspirators, but that they were holding meetings and acting in a manner calculated to excite strong suspicions as to their intentions. At such a crisis what was to be done? Should he send in a report and wait for orders, or should he act at once on his own responsibility? Fortunate, indeed, it was for the lives of many English men and women that he was not the man to flinch from responsibility, and that he took his measures with cautious and yet bold decision. He knew that the Wahabis would not move without their leaders, and he simply resolved to arrest those leaders as quietly as possible, and hold them as hostages for the good behaviour of the sect. A meeting of the principal inhabitants was forthwith convened at the house of the commissioner, ostensibly with the purpose of concerting measures for the safety of the town; and to the meeting came the men who were wanted—Mahomed Hossein, the spiritual leader of the sect; the notorious Ahmed Oolah, the principal disciple; and Moulvee Waizool Huq. Seats were provided at a long table in the dining-room, and

the meeting opened with the usual form. Two of the Wahabi chiefs looked somewhat uneasy, but Ahmed Oolah entered into the discussion with much volubility and apparent *nonchalance*, made several propositions for the safety of the city, and appeared thoroughly to appreciate the object of the meeting. When the meeting broke up, the chiefs were requested to remain behind, when the commissioner acquainted them with his intentions regarding them. With wonderful readiness Ahmed Oolah placed his hands together, and said that they appreciated his Excellency's kindness and wisdom more than ever they had done before, seeing that their enemies would for the future be unable to make false charges against them. The chiefs were then removed, and placed under a guard of Seiks. The city was then disarmed as completely as possible, and the general result was that, with the exception of a trifling *émeute*, which broke down in consequence of the precautionary measures adopted, Patna remained quiet throughout the rebellion. When all danger was finally over, and just as the commissioner was receiving the congratulations of his friends, he was dismissed from his appointment on the shallow pretext of having committed an error of judgment. The "Wahabi gentlemen," as they were termed by Government, were shortly afterwards released, and

the deputy collector, Mowla Buksh, who had been the commissioner's right-hand man, was ignominiously removed from Patna. We need hardly say that the gentleman (Mr. Samuells) sent down to supplant the commissioner was a man after the heart of his masters—that he soon reported that "there was not the slightest proof that any danger was to be apprehended from this sect, and that there was absolutely none for attributing seditious designs to the Wahabis." The triumph of the sect was now complete. Their enemies had been cast down and publicly disgraced, while the chief of their enemies was kept without employment for seven months, and then packed off some six hundred miles to the remotest corner of the province. It now only remained for the Government to cover itself with ridicule, and this it at once proceeded to do. Ahmed Oolah was received by Mr Samuells with open arms, his sufferings condoled with, while his deeply injured feelings were soothed with a Government appointment, and for several years he sat with the commissioner and other English gentlemen on the Committee of Public Instruction at Patna. The wily chief was indeed a man whom the Government delighted to honour, and in the year 1863 might have been seen shaking hands with the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, in the reception-hall of Belvedere, pre-

paratory to being formally introduced to the Governor-General. But just as he was at the highest point of favour, and holding grave counsel with English officials as to the best way of furthering the moral and intellectual interests of the rising generation, there arrived all the way from Umballa, in the Punjab, a certain Captain Parsons, who went straight to the quarters of the Wahabis, made several arrests, and carried off a batch of prisoners forthwith for trial in the criminal courts of the Punjab. After this batch of conspirators had been disposed of came the turn of the now notorious Ahmed Oolah, the pet of the Bengal Government. He was forthwith arrested, convicted on the clearest evidence, sentenced to be hanged, and subsequently banished to the Andamans; and we have to add that he was at Port Blair at the time Lord Mayo was murdered.* Now that circumstances had come to the rescue of the innocent, Mowla Buksh has been decorated with the Star of India, and we soon hope to learn that Mr Tayler, the commissioner, has received some reparation for his unmerited disgrace.*

* In allusion to the Wahabi conspiracy the late Sir Herbert B. Edwardes wrote as follows:—"The centre of this truly bitter and formidable conspiracy was Patna. You lived there, and knew what was going on. You acted on your knowledge, and paralysed the whole of the Wahabi sect, by seizing their leader at the very moment when they could and would have struck a heavy blow against us. The Bengal

The reader will naturally be anxious to learn why we have told this long story, and we must therefore say that we have done so partly to give an idea of the extraordinary astuteness of the Wahabis and the gullibility of the English, but mainly to show that in India, if we wait for such evidence of a conspiracy as would satisfy Chief Justice Bovill in a court of law, we may wait for ever. Such evidence is seldom or never procurable, and if Mr Tayler had waited for it Patna would have gone. He had to form his opinion by a variety of information and facts, not one particular of which, in all probability, could be admitted as strictly legal evidence. And in judging as to the probable causes of Lord Mayo's murder we must do the same. The exact link between the Wahabis and Shere Ali we shall probably never learn; but here are the leading points, and the reader can form his own conclusions.

First of all, immediately after the conviction of Ahmed Oolah in 1865, an attempt was made to murder Mr. Ainslie, the convicting judge, at Patna. In the next place Chief Justice Norman fell a victim to the assassin's knife immediately

Government was determined not to believe in the Wahabi conspiracy, and punished you for your vigour. Time has done you justice, shown that you were right, and hanged or transported the enemies whom you suspected and disarmed."—From a published letter of Sir Herbert Edwardes to Mr. William Tayler.

after rejecting sundry applications made on behalf of the Wahabis, and just before he was about to sit on the Wahabi appeals. In the third place we come to the sad murder of Lord Mayo, whose activity in pursuit of the sect was notorious. As regards the facts connected with Port Blair, they are simply these. Nearly all the Wahabi convicts were there, and headed by their most influential chief—our old acquaintance—Ahmed Oolah, and from the laxity of discipline had frequent communication with their friends in India; and further, it is an absolute fact, that when one of the spiritual leaders was arrested some years ago, three letters from a Wahabi convict on the Andamans were found amongst his papers.

We may repeat, that if the Government waits for legal evidence, it may wait for ever; and the question now is, whether we should wait for more assassinations or act at once. There can be no doubt that we ought to choose the latter alternative. This Wahabiism must be stamped out. These men, it must be remembered, do not appreciate our forbearance; they call it cowardice, and the more we exhibit of it, the greater contempt they will naturally feel for us. It should be proclaimed from one end of India to the other, that any one convicted of treason will be hanged, the whole of his kith and kin banished, and the possessions

of the family forfeited to the State.* A barbarous remedy truly, it will be said, but we must in any case be content for many a year to come, and for ever if we continue our present system of government, to say with Macbeth :—

> "For mine own good,
> All causes shall give way; I am in blood
> Stepp'd in so far, that, should I wade no more,
> Returning were as tedious as go o'er."

We are aware that the course recommended will be in the last degree unpalatable to the tender-hearted British people; but if we do not choose to govern the country, at least to some extent, on Asiatic principles, the sooner we leave it the better.

In conclusion, we must protest, as strongly as possible, against the adoption for the future of the course pursued as regards Chief Justice Norman's murderer. He was, the reader will recollect, not only subjected to every possible personal indignity, but the Government, by burning the body, showed in the eyes of the people a malicious desire to injure the prospects of the deceased in a future

* We believe that the French stamped out the vendetta in Corsica by the simple process of putting a murderer's kith and kin in gaol till he gave himself up.

state. This action of the Government, as has been amply seen from the murder that followed, is not sufficient to act as a deterrent, while it exasperated the Mahommedans to the highest degree, and is supposed by some to have had no small effect in aiding to bring about the assassination of Lord Mayo, who approved of the indignities practised on the murderer and his remains.

As it is probable that many will read this paper who never read a line about India before, and who perhaps will never do so again till another Governor-General is murdered, I may be allowed here to offer one word of warning. That word is simply, that the people of England should either rouse themselves up, and put their Indian affairs in order, or that they should get back as fast as possible the enormous sum they have been weak enough to lend on the security of an empire which not only contains all the elements of decay, but which, at this moment, is only preserved from immediate and utter bankruptcy by the fact that it is still able to force some eight millions worth (nearly one-sixth of the revenue) of opium on the Chinese.

I may here add that it has since been proved by Shere Ali's last letter to his cousin Arsala Khan, that, so far from being miserable at the Andamans, Shere Ali seemed to think himself rather well off

than otherwise; and there is also strong reason for asserting that he had expectations of obtaining the pardon of the Government. This, I need hardly say, makes it still more probable that he was urged on to the deed by the Wahabis.

CONCERNING JOHN'S INDIAN AFFAIRS.

IV.

MY DEAR JOHN,—Some weeks after my last interview you were kind enough to send for me again, in order that sundry matters regarding your Indian affairs might be discussed, and during the visit in question the whole of my suggestions as to the future management of your Indian property were brought to an end. In this final conversation, if you remember, the Finance Committee was again alluded to, and some practical methods suggested for bringing its work to a satisfactory conclusion. Other matters connected with the remodelling of the Indian Government were also discussed. Altogether our conversation seemed to be so interesting and important, that I feel fully justified in reminding you of at least a portion of our final talk on Indian affairs.

I commenced the conversation, you will remem-

ber, by observing that the Secretary of State for India seems at last to have arrived at that beatific condition described in the ancient Hindoo books, where it is said that the sight most pleasing to God is when a Brahmin, steadfastly contemplating the tip of his nose for a lengthened period of time, repeats at intervals the sacred monosyllable. That condition of mind, where the soul, as it were, retires completely within itself—that state in which the individual sees nothing beyond the termination of his nose, has at length been satisfactorily attained by an exalted member of our aristocracy, and will no doubt be looked upon by the Brahminical sages as a pleasing proof of the progress of the British race. But, to speak seriously, my dear John, this passive state of your principal Indian agent at Westminster is an indication of the rottenness of your Indian estate management which is worthy of elaborate record. What is that we see? Well, we actually behold an individual who is in fact the Emperor of India, remaining absolutely deaf to all the clamour of his subjects—to all the representations of important officials—to all the representations of the most powerful organ of the most powerful press in the world. Steadfastly contemplating the tip of his nose, he refuses not only to act, but not even to notice indications which no other person in the world

similarly situated could contemplate without uneasiness, and without making at least some endeavour to provide a remedy for the evils complained of. But the evil I allude to, the evil of an iniquitous and galling tax, still remains to be an instrument of oppression, and a curse to millions of the inhabitants of your Indian estates. That tax has been repeatedly alluded to, I am aware, but I am equally aware that while the very name* of it exists it cannot be alluded to too often, and I hope you will allow me to mention some facts which I omitted in our last conversation. Let me point, then, for one moment, my dear John, to the *Times* of December 5th, and call your attention to the evidence there adduced as regards the Income Tax, and to the able leading article which pronounces what every one must consider to be a satisfactory and final judgment. So decisive, indeed, were the reports on the oppression arising from this abominable scourge that the *Times* simply declared that "even financial equilibrium, however desirable, may be purchased too dearly, and whatever may be the theoretical recommendations of an Income Tax, its practical

* As long as the very name of this tax exists it will be quite sufficient to enable the low-class tax-gatherers to bully the ignorant rural classes, who have no knowledge of the numerous taxational fluctuations, and are necessarily at the mercy of their sole informants, the tax-gatherers aforesaid.

evils, as they are delineated in the communications of our correspondent, must be allowed to preponderate. In any case, however," it is afterwards added, "we fear that an Income Tax, unacceptable everywhere, is really an exotic that cannot be acclimatized in India, and that some substitute must ultimately be found for an impost admitting of such intolerable abuses." But, my dear John, I assert, without fear of contradiction, that your very highest agents have always been aware of the oppression and evils arising from this tax; and I may here mention that a friend of mine, at that time a high Indian official, was present when the late Lord Canning was told by the collector of Cawnpore, that he had simply ordered all the returns in his district to be doubled, as he *thought* that the natives had *all* sent in incorrect returns. But arbitrary exactions like these are nothing compared to the various powers of annoyance which are at the command of the corrupt petty officials who are responsible for the collection of the tax. Of these powers we have had many proofs, but the following facts are, perhaps, better calculated to convey an idea of the evils to be apprehended than anything that has yet been published. When the tax was imposed at Benares two native chiefs—Rajah Raliaram and Deonarain Singh—came forward and made themselves responsible for

the collection of the whole amount demanded from the city, in order to spare the people from the intolerable infliction of having our tax-collectors let loose on them. They collected what they could, and paid up the amount, but at a loss to themselves of about two thousand pounds. Such indeed, my dear John, is the nature of this tax that a relative of mine, who has lately returned from India, told me only the other day that no more disagreeable and painful duty could be imposed on an officer of Government. He had been employed in the collection of the tax, and he told me that the collection was as painful to the Government officer as it was to the people. If the amount demanded was not paid up in fifteen days the tax was doubled. And a common trick, he said, was for the assessors to tax people who could not appeal, for the simple reason that they could hardly find money enough to pay the stamps which must be attached to the petition. Here you begged to interrupt me for one moment, and said you were quite satisfied that a grosser instance of despotism than the maintenance of such a tax had never occurred in civilised times. "I am now quite prepared to admit," you continued, "that immense evils exist as regards the management of my Indian estates, and that a complete reformation of the whole system of government is

urgently required; but how can you expect the poor Duke and Grant Duff can bring in a bill for setting my Indian affairs in order till they have got in the report of the Finance Committee, which is inquiring so long and wonderfully into matters, and which, I am told, is so constituted as to get at all the evidence procurable?" At this point of the conversation, you may remember, you were very nearly sending for your physician, for I could do nothing but ejaculate, "Get at all the evidence procurable—get at all the evidence procurable!" and simply stood staring at you like a cow bursting upon clover. After a rush of bewildering thought I, however, managed to rally at last, and proceeded to inform you that whoever told you anything to produce such an impression as that must have evidently swallowed an enormous dose of cocculus indicus. The Duke of Argyll, I suppose, told you all that—or was it Grant Duff, the Under Secretary of State for India, who sits on the right hand of the chairman of the committee, watching the case for Government, and who has ventured not only to snub, and endeavour to turn into ridicule, but even vaguely, and some might say distinctly, to threaten, an Indian official who has dared to utter unpalatable truths? Why, my dear John, you might put all the talent in England into the committee, and I would defy it to obtain a satisfactory

result, if you set it to work in the same way as this committee has been. If it was a committee to inquire into the Game Laws, would the inquiry be satisfactory if gamekeepers were mainly examined, and there was no one, or only an occasional individual, to represent the tenant farmers? But the flimsy veil this committee cast over the deliberate denial of justice to the people of India—a denial of justice as fatal to the English as to them—has long ago been seen through by the shrewd-witted Indians. It was only the other day that one of them said to me, "This committee will not only come to nothing, but it will be worse than nothing, for if ever any inquiry is asked for again it will be said, 'Oh, you have had a committee already, and nothing whatever has been discovered, and what is the use of having another?'" And now, my dear John, if you will allow me, I will tell you something about the committee; I will next show you what Grant Duff has been doing, and how his treatment of one of the witnesses has produced the most disagreeable conclusions as regards the fairness of the Government; and, finally, I will show you how alone any investigations can be brought to a conclusion thoroughly satisfactory to both countries.

And here, at the outset, allow me to say, that if you want to improve your opinion of Englishmen

in general, you could not do better than go in disguise and observe the proceedings of your Indian Finance Committee. And, my dear John, I am not at all speaking by guess; for, on the 12th of April last, the committee honoured your humble servant so far as to ask him three hundred and ninety-three questions. It was nervous work, I can tell you, and was a great deal worse than going into a jungle on foot after a wounded tiger, where you can't see far before you. The chairman, it is true, had somewhat a sleepy look (an appearance not always to be trusted, by the way), and some of the committee looked harmless enough; but when you are fairly enclosed in the arena, with a reporter at your elbow, and twelve or thirteen pair of eyes regarding you, and the prospect before you of an indefinite examination, the situation to a man who has had plenty of jungle fever is far from comfortable. My anxiety to meet the wishes of the committee was, as you may imagine, very great; and, indeed, so much was this the case, that I soon threw the whole proceedings into confusion. I commenced my answers before the examiner had quite finished his questions, and this, of course, reduced the reporter to despair. Then my utterance was too rapid, and, from looking at the examiner instead of addressing my answer to the chairman, the members on the other side could

not hear. But the patience and good-nature of the committee soon set me fairly at my ease, and then away we went, question and answer, and answer and question, for more than three mortal hours—in fact, for the whole sitting. And, my dear John, I must say that the examination was extremely fair; there was an evident and honest desire to get at the truth, and not to put one in a hole; and if you stepped partially into a hole, which I did once or twice for want of readiness, some member, when it came to his turn, asked questions calculated to supply the defects of former answers. One elderly gentleman, however, addressed me rather sternly, and at one time seemed inclined to be somewhat sarcastic. But this, I believe, was mainly because he was labouring under the erroneous idea that I was what is commonly called poking fun at him. Having found out that I was really doing nothing of the kind, he eventually seemed to consider me as, to say the least, somewhat eccentric. And, my dear John, as this gentleman was a Manchesterian, and may be presumed fairly to represent the men of his class, it may not be altogether uninteresting if I briefly glance at some of his questions, as they will show you how very ignorant people are in this country as regards the conditions of Indian life, and how little Eastern civilisation is likely to be benefited

by having the new wine of Manchester poured in upon it.

My Manchesterian examiner commenced with about eight questions, of a nature not worth detailing, and things were going on well enough till we came to loggerheads as to the value of time. This arose from my having pointed out that where ferries are possible, you should never have bridges in India, at least in the rural districts, because the country can't afford them. "Then," said my examiner, "you probably think that we did very unwisely in the erection of bridges in Europe?" To this I replied, that time is of great importance in Europe. "Then why should it not be so in India?" was the next question. "Well, simply because whether a man takes half an hour in getting his cart over a river, or takes five minutes in going over a bridge, is really a matter of no importance with reference to the demands on his time." "But do you not think that an economy of time might be of great value to the natives of India?" To this I replied, that, generally speaking, it certainly would not; and begged to add that what I was mainly contending for was that the first thing wanted in India is irrigation, and that all the money you take from the country to spend on bridging rivers that can be crossed in other ways is a loss to the country. Then my

examiner went to that well-worn topic—the resources of India. "What," he asked, "are the resources of India to which you look for the country being made more productive, and the people placed in a more prosperous condition?" And here, my dear John, I fell into irretrievable disgrace: for I simply said that there are no resources in India; and then, after a pause, added that there is only one resource in India, water, to add to the production of the soil. "But you are aware," urged my examiner, "that India has been celebrated for manufacturing produce of great value, beauty, and usefulness?" To this I replied in the affirmative. "Then why cannot India run a race with us? India was in advance of us some centuries ago; why cannot she resume her position by increased activity?" To this I replied, that if Manchester has the means of producing at a cheaper rate, the incentive to increased activity does not exist: and here we got to the end of the resources of India. Then we got to sugar, cotton, and wool; and, nothing of any importance having been elicited, my examiner got back to the economy of time, a subject which he, as a Manchesterian, could not lose sight of. And here, my dear John, if you will allow me, I will just read a few of the questions and answers, as they stand in the report of the evidence.

"3207. Do not you think that an increase of bridges and roads, giving facilities for communication, will be a great convenience to all those having produce to send away?—Certainly, in the case of roads; but I consider that the time saved by building an immense bridge is not worth the money to the country, considering that irrigation works are so much needed.

"3208. You are probably aware that all the inventions of this country of utility are based on the economy of time?—Yes; but that rule does not apply to the natives of India. Supposing a man in Mysore has half-a-dozen carts, and carries coffee to the coast, he can only make one trip during the season, and would never make a second by saving ten minutes here and there by going over a bridge; and the same rule would apply elsewhere."

After a few questions more my examiner was evidently reduced to despair, and said, "On the whole you arrive at the conclusion that India should be left very much in the state it is now?" No; that it should be watered, and that, having been watered, it should be left alone. "But," urged my examiner, quite forgetting that with irrigation comes mud, and manure of the most valuable description, "water is a mere solvent; it is not nutritious in itself." However, not to bore you

more than I can help, my dear John, I will hurry on as fast as possible, and get to what I am told is the favourite expedient for developing the resources of India—deep ploughing; and here I was asked if ploughing to the depth of say eighteen inches had ever been tried in India? To this I replied that it would not pay to carry it out with the means existing in the country. Then we got to famines, and other matters, and then my questioner wanted to know whether more coffee was not grown in Tanjore than in Mysore, Tanjore being a region impossible for the production of coffee. My examiner was now all but exhausted, but an idea of promise at last seemed to occur to him, and it was this:—

"3225. Do the natives read the agricultural reports that are published in this country; have they any idea of what is going on here; are they acquainted with the vast activities prevailing, not only in Great Britain but on the continent of Europe?" What a temptation to ask whether the farmers in this country, supposing them to be unable to read any language, were in the habit of consulting the best Chinese works on agriculture! But, my dear John, I simply said that I didn't think they had any knowledge of these things at all.

3226 was the last, and it was this: "Is there no-

thing that can be done to stimulate them to render themselves more comfortable and more useful in the great family of mankind?—Water is the great thing to stimulate them, as I said before;" and here the man of Manchester sank back fairly exhausted. Now, my dear John, I have since made some enquiries about this gentleman, and I am told that he is president of an important chamber of commerce, one of those bodies that are always worrying at the Government to develop the resources that they imagine must exist somewhere in India, and if the knowledge of the members of such bodies is of a piece with the knowledge of this worthy man, how can you imagine that your Indian agents can both serve them and the natives at the same time? The Manchesterians want, above all things, bridges and railways for the economization of time, or, in other words, to get produce cheaply to the coast; whilst the natives want firstly irrigation, not only because it is their only resource, but to save them from the risks of famine. And so the cart has been put before the horse, and will be so for many a year to come, to the great detriment of both countries; for it is as much to the interests of the Manchesterians as it is of the Indians, that the country should be watered first and railed afterwards, seeing that there is no money to do both at once. And, my

dear John, if you consider for one moment, you will see that whichever way you turn as regards matters Indian, the answer always comes the same, and you get to water at last. If the financier comes to me, I tell him that the key of finance is population, to pay plenty of taxes; that the key of population is ample and certain food; and that the only key to regular and ample food is to be found in water. If the general politician comes to me, I say to him that if we wish to hold our own in India this can best be done by rendering her people rich and contented; that this can only be done by developing the resources of the soil, and that this again can only be done by cheap and abundant water. If Manchester comes to me I say that India can only become an active purchaser of her wares by being enriched; and here again we get to the one, the only answer. If Manchester again comes to me and says that she wants an improved quality of cotton, and that she wants to have it as cheaply and regularly as possible, I say this can only be effected by irrigation, and by rendering agriculture so safe that the area devoted to the production of food can be safely reduced, and more land spared for cotton without the smallest risk of famine. If the investor in Indian railways comes to me and complains of the miserable traffic receipts and paltry earnings, I point to the

fact that if ever he wants railways to pay he must find more produce to carry, and here again we get to water. If the general observer comes to me, and says that you can't expect rapid development in a climate which relaxes the frame, and where the people are thus naturally possessed of but little enterprise in matters requiring much physical exertion—if such a man comes to me, I tell him that we must find some way which shall add to the resources of the country with the least possible demand on the labour forces of the people, and this can only be done by water. Ask any man you choose who really knows India well, and who is able to take in at one glance all the circumstances of the situation—ask any such man what is to be done, and he will tell you to get Rungasamy up to his middle in mud and leave him alone.

And now, my dear John, all this talk about water reminds me of famines, and that I was asked a number of questions as regards these awfully frequent calamities—so many, in fact, that without boring you to death, I could hardly give you an idea of all the points raised during the course of the enquiry. I may tell you, however, that I suggested that grain should be procured by Government, and laid up in granaries in all districts where famines are possible, so as to help the people

through a time of dearth, and, waiving all considerations of humanity, I urged that their safety is the first thing to be looked to, and that we should provide so that it would be impossible to have a famine in future to carry off a million or so of tax-payers. Out of this arose a multitude of questions. The catalogue of deaths* from famine seemed certainly to strike the committee as an important fact, but they seemed very unwilling to surrender themselves to an idea so contrary to what are called the laws of political economy. But to every objection I simply urged that the safety of life must be secured; but, to give you a notion of the objections, urged one of the committee—

"3133. Then, instead of endeavouring in any way to encourage habits of forethought or providence in the people, you would discourage them by making the Government undertake the duty of feeding them?—I consider that the people are in that particular state of civilisation that you cannot look to them to take such precautions as a more civilised people would do, and therefore you must treat them to a certain extent as children instead

* In the famine in the North-Western Provinces 250,000 people perished; in the Orissa famine, 1,200,000; and in the Rajputana famine, 1,364,529; making a grand total of 2,814,529 deaths; and these famines have all taken place since the year 1861. Then there seems to have been some form of famine lately in Ganjam, but there are no particulars published as yet that I am aware of.

of letting them die from famine, as they commonly do, by millions, because to preserve their lives in the way I have suggested would be contrary to the so-called laws of political economy."

I was subsequently asked why grain should not be imported, but I pointed out that there were really no corn-growing countries within reach—that you had none at all on the west, while on the east there is only Burmah to rely on. Then we got to railways, but I pointed out that the tendency of railways was to increase the risks of famine, by encouraging the production of articles of export that cannot be eaten; and as to their being able to prevent famines, I pointed to the fact that there was a railway right up to the famine districts of 1861, and yet that the people died to the amount of about a quarter of a million. Altogether, there seems to be no immediate way of averting famines except by keeping stores of grain in the country; and I pointed out, secondly, that we could look to irrigation alone for making the people independent of any assistance on the part of Government. And, my dear John, it has since occurred to me that there would be no objection to these granaries at all if, when the grain was in danger of being spoiled from age, the old was exchanged for new grain. Some grain, I may observe, as for instance ragee, will keep in these dry climates for an im-

mense time, so that there would be no occasion for the Government to turn itself into a grain dealer. And here, my dear John, I may as well give you a few examples of the questions raised on this subject, if you will just allow me to read them to you as they stand.

"3368. Will not the fact of their having such stores to fall back upon rather render the people negligent in making exertions for themselves in order to bring grain from a distance?—It might perhaps do so, but I consider that the first duty is to see that the safety of life is preserved; that that is the key of the position, and that everything should give way to it.

"3369. We will grant that; but I want to see what the results of your mode of doing this are. Now, will not the fact of there being these Government stores in reserve operate to prevent private cultivators from storing up their own grain, or holding back their own grain?—No, I do not think so; because, owing to their present position and knowledge, we see that they actually sell out their grain, and I am not aware that they would be influenced in any way by the fact that there were granaries at hand; they do now, notwithstanding the risks of famine, sell out their grain to a dangerous extent.

"3370. Do you think that it will always be the

case with the natives of India, that they will be so indifferent to the general law which governs dealers in any commodity elsewhere, that they will not care to hold back an article which they see is rising in price and likely to become more profitable?—Well, I think that in their present state of civilisation, and up to such time as the people advance very much indeed, to such a period as you could not look forward to—I believe for a great number of years—the people would act in what you may call an improvident manner, and we see that they have actually done so.

"3371. Where?—In those countries where famines have occurred.

"3372. Where they have, to a certain extent, relied upon the Government to help them?—I do not know what they relied on, I am sure; but whether they relied on the Government or not, they have died.

"3373. Do you think that it is wise to lead people to rely on the Government to help them through these crises?—Yes; until the people are more efficiently educated, and are better able to take care of themselves.

"3374. Do not you think that there would be considerable danger, both of jobbing and discontent and suspicion, if the Government had stores of this kind scattered all over the country,

which were to be thrown on the market at the discretion of Government officers?—No: I do not see what ill effects could arise from it, unless you made them into grain dealers from year to year, which is a case I am not assuming."

And now, my dear John, I won't trouble you any more about these famines; but the fact is, that from having lived amongst the people, and witnessed the general tendency, from the facilities given by roads and railways, to hoard values in cash instead of in grain as they used to do, I do not think it possible that, from both humane and financial considerations, too much attention could be paid to the subject. Nor would what I propose be such a very gigantic undertaking. I would simply take the map of India, and say, "Here you have irrigation, here you have districts where the monsoons have never been known to fail, there you have districts contiguous to safe grain-producing countries." All these I would of course except, and I would firmly secure my base in other parts by laying up grain, nor would I break up my granaries till I had by irrigation given the people that safety of life which they have a right to demand of their rulers. Here you begged to interrupt me for one moment, and observed that there certainly seemed to be some sense in what I said, "but," you continued, "the objections urged

by the committee certainly seem very serious, and the notion of setting up granaries seems to be the revival of a system long ago exploded, and would interfere with the laws of supply and demand." Here I observed that you do here in effect exactly what I propose should be done there. You don't allow people to perish by thousands by the roadsides, in order to encourage habits of forethought amongst the lower classes, and much less do you let them die by millions. You recognise the duty of saving life, and take the chance of being able to teach habits of forethought by educating and improving the people, instead of letting them improve themselves off the face of the earth. "But," you urged, "we buy food in the ordinary way, and feed the people in the workhouse, and that is not at all the same thing." Now, my dear John, this sounds all very well, but if, from the experience of the past, it had clearly been found that you could not, from any combination of causes, provide food in time to save the lives of the people, it would clearly be your duty to lay up food, in your poorhouses, beforehand. The principle, you see, is exactly the same, but Englishmen are so dreadfully groovy, that if you propose to carry out a thing in a slightly different way from what they have been accustomed to, you can hardly drive

the point into their heads by any known process of reasoning.

After famines the question next in importance related to Public Works, when my answers tended to prove that all these matters should be left to the decision of the revenue authorities, whose interests are identical with those of the people, seeing that the interests of both lie in the economical development of the resources of the country, and because being in constant contact with the population they are best able to judge as to what the most urgent requirements of the country really are. In short I pointed out that the engineers should be merely the executive servants of the revenue authorities. Connected with the position of public works we got, I may mention, to the point as to whether native engineers are competent to carry out important works. To this I replied that they certainly had succeeded admirably in everything they had undertaken (a great deal more than can be said for our engineers, by the way), and as a proof of this I pointed to the magnificent irrigation works, tanks and channels, works many of which had been constructed hundreds of years ago. Then we got to bridges, and here I was able to point out that the natives had been as successful in bridging large rivers as in the other works they had undertaken, and instanced the stone bridges

constructed in the province of Mysore—bridges that have withstood the floods of sixty, and in one instance of more than a hundred years. And generally the evidence on the head of bridges went to show that there was a strong tendency (I suppose with the idea of developing the resources of our iron-masters), not only to put up bridges which the country could well do without, but to send out iron bridges from England, instead of using the materials of the country.

Amongst the numerous objects of enquiry agriculture, as you may imagine, was not neglected, and the well-worn subject of the loss arising from using cattle-dung as a fuel of course came foremost. And here, my dear John, I trust I set the minds of the committee finally at rest as regards these stercoraceous deposits, about which such numerous laments have been made. The fact is that in a thousand pounds of the dung of grass-fed cattle in this country, there are only seven pounds of valuable manure (four pounds of nitrogen, three pounds of phosphoric acid, and four pounds of lime), and the amount in the dung of the very lean kine of India must be still less. Well, the ashes of the burnt dung are always returned to the soil, and, in the opinion of an experienced chemist in this country, the loss of manure is extremely small, and what loss there may be is

amply compensated for by the fact that in consequence solely of the demand for fuel, every morsel of manure that falls on the highway and on the barren plain is carefully gathered up to add to the general stock. The whole of the existing delusion regarding the immense loss arising from the use of cattle-dung as fuel, arises, I believe, from the fact that people have been arguing as if the cattle were fat, oilcake-fed beasts, instead of animals which are generally in greyhound condition, and because they are under the idea that burning cattle-dung for fuel is equivalent to using farmyard manure for that purpose. The manure question having been disposed of, the committee turned its attention to machinery, and asked if I had any information to give regarding the introduction of English machinery into India. Very little, I said, except that a reaping machine had been exhibited near Bangalore; and it certainly did astonish the natives, my dear John, for it simply swept everything before it, the crop ready for the sickle, and the leguminous plants which are put down with the corn crop, and which come on as a secondary crop after the corn crop has been got in. In short, not to worry you with any further details, I may simply say that my evidence tended to show, that with reference to the means available in the country, it was impossible

to improve the agriculture in any way in any part of India. The fact is, my dear John, that the late manager of my coffee plantations in Mysore was a shrewd-headed Scotch farmer—a man of first-class intelligence — and he naturally examined closely into the agricultural system, and the end of it was that he said, "Well, when I came here first, I thought I could effect great improvements, but I now see I can suggest nothing at all unless it is an alteration in the plough at present in use." It is of course very easy to prove on an experimental farm that it would be an advantage to grow crops to feed cattle fat, and produce better manure, and an improved system of agriculture, but when you come to apply your improved system to the existing condition of things, and the smallness of the holdings, you will find that you can effect simply nothing. And here, my dear John, I may as well tell you that I find my conclusions amply confirmed by Mr. W. R. Robertson, the able manager of the Sydapet experimental farm, Madras Presidency. He tells us that "we greatly undervalue native implements and tools," and adds that "take, for example, the Picottah (native water-raising apparatus), mamotie, the plough and drill; these are frequently made of very inferior materials, and are carelessly put together; still, taking into consideration their small cost and

their suitability to the present circumstances of the ryot, I feel sure we have nothing that will successfully compete with them." And if, my dear John, you will go to the trouble of looking over the reports of three successive years you will find that in this farm alone, in that period, upwards of £4,000 have been spent, without a single fact having been discovered that is of any practical use to the present circumstances of the Indian farmer. The breed of sheep, however, has been improved, and as the improvement of the breed of cattle and sheep is really of importance, it is to be hoped that attention may, for the future, be almost exclusively paid to this branch of farming, which will give an immediate return for the outlay, and might be made to pay both the Government and the people.

And now, my dear John, I am only going to notice one point more as regards my evidence, and that has reference to the steady decrease of the native stake in our securities. And here I cannot, perhaps, do better than read you a few of the questions and answers on the subject.

"3460. Have you not expressed an opinion that a subject of very grave importance is, that the natives are each year retaining a smaller amount invested in English securities in our Government loans?—Yes; their stake in our funds seems to have been steadily decreasing, and if you look

at the end of that blue book (the first Report of the Finance Committee), you will see that it has decreased steadily, and to the extent of more than a million within the last few years. What the amount of decrease has been since the mutiny I do not know, but there has been a decrease.

"3461. Then your point is this, that the seriousness of the state of things is greatly increased when it is borne in mind that, as the financial stake of England increases in India, the stake of the Indian people in the debt of India diminishes? —Yes.

"3462. And you think that it is going on at the present time?—Yes; it is due to a want of confidence on the part of the people in the Government; and I myself share that so far that as a trustee, whereas three years ago I recommended money to be invested in Indian securities, I felt it my duty the other day, after careful consideration, to recommend these funds to be sold, and the proceeds invested in securities in this country, and I am not surprised that the natives, feeling doubts as to the stability of our rule in India, should diminish their stake in the debt.

"3463. Why during the last three years has your belief in the stability of our financial position in India so much diminished?—From the great increase of indebtedness, and the generally expen-

sive nature of the Government, and in fact from the general tendency shown to go from bad to worse, to increase our risks.

"3464. Then you think that the gravest danger that we have to contend against in India is coming financial embarrassment?—Undoubtedly; our stake in India is so very large that a slight disturbance would derange our finances hopelessly, and I think that the natives, perceiving the possibility of that, decline to trust their money with us. In fact, I know that a native expressed that opinion to a friend of mine, who asked him why he did not invest; he said that the Empire might go smash, and he would sooner have his money in his pocket or under the ground."

And the only set-off we seem to have against this is that Maharaja Holkar has lent us a quarter of a million to make a state railway in his Highness's territories. That this fact did not quite tally with the opinion expressed by me, was pointed out by one of the committee, but I replied that one swallow did not make a summer, and then, my dear John, Holkar might have consoled himself in the reflection that, if our Empire did go smash, he would still have the railway to fall back on.

At this point of our conversation you said you were sick to death of my evidence, and as I was beginning to get more than tired with it myself, I

hastened on to the consideration of Duff's conduct on the committee. Here you again begged to interrupt me and said, "Now, my good man, you had better be very careful. Duff, as I told you before, has exerted himself immensely as regards my Indian estates. He has looked sharp after the cotton, and sent out more cotton gardeners. He is also looking after silk, and even talks of getting my salt into India, and, as I told you before, he seems to be determined to get everything possible out of, and everything possible (of my own making) into, my Indian estates. If you will only look at his own peculiar pet, the annual report of the moral and material progress made on my Indian estates, you will soon see how advantageously my agents are laying out the proceeds of the concern. Just look at the railways alone; why they are actually doing something, more or less, on fifteen different lines of railway, and they are going to make fifteen thousand miles in all; and my finance man in India with honest pride brings forward the fact that they are going to get through another thirty millions of English money within the next ten years alone, and that will make the total cost of the Indian railways up to about one hundred and fifty millions, a sum that any Government might have been proud to have got through in works of such utility had they even been at work

for twice the time my agents have been. Now, what have you to say to all that? I see that you are pleased to sneer, and I must insist on an explanation before I have a word on any other subject." Finding you quite determined, I then at once, you will remember, begged to bring to your notice the following facts as regards Indian railways, and the magnificent profits that have been derived from them.

And now, my dear John, let us look at the economic results of Indian railways first of all. Well, speaking in round numbers we may say that they have actually cost from first to last one hundred and twenty millions, and as the annual value of this sum is declared to be not less than 5 per cent., and the railways only pay two and a half millions a year, it follows that the annual loss which is practically extracted from this poverty-stricken country comes to three and a half millions. Now this is a strictly accurate way of looking at matters, for it includes everything—the sums actually spent on the works, as well as the twenty-four millions that have been taken from the peasants of India to make good the interest payable to the English shareholders. But this, of course, is not the way Indian officials like to look at the matter; and here these gentlemen have been fortunate in finding an able defender in Colonel Chesney, who with convincing logic urges that it is

really a matter hardly worth mentioning, seeing "that the saving (of the twenty-four millions aforesaid) would have gone to increase the public works grant, or some other source of expenditure." However, as our Indian officials don't seem to like statements which calculate profits from the expenses actually incurred, we will take their own statements and see what we can make of them. And here we cannot do better than go straight to Sir Richard Temple's financial statement for 1871-72, and review that portion of it which relates to railways. In the first place I have to observe that he informs the public that the railways in India, as a whole, are paying less than 3 per cent. In the next place, I have to inform you that he says that "tonnage and passenger traffic show no considerable increase of late, and leave an immense way for our traffic to make up before it will bear any favourable comparison either with the size and population of India itself, or with the results obtained from railway communications in other parts of the world;" and he also points out that *within the last five years only two lines show any large increase of earnings, and that the other lines have remained comparatively stationary in this respect during the period in question.* The next fact of importance is that the guaranteed interest levied from the people of India to enable the Government to pay the English shareholders their 5 per cent.

interest, must be set down at £1,856,900. And here Sir Richard seems to have fallen into a state of low doubt as to the value of railways, for we find him saying that "the steady accretion year by year of these payments does indeed form matter for serious reflection;" and when he subsequently informs the public that "the growing importance of railway finance will hence be apparent to the tax-payers of India," we loudly applaud a remark, which would have been even more correct if he had placed the word "disagreeably" before "apparent." After these cheering statements, you might naturally suppose that Sir Richard would counsel your Indian agents to pause, at least for a time, before proceeding with such tempting undertakings. But so far from that we find the low-doubt vein rapidly disappearing, to be succeeded first of all by a tinge of joyous well-being; and from that, passing from a state of buoyant satisfaction, we find him fairly landed into a condition approaching to expansive delirium. We purpose to carry out a grand total of fifteen thousand miles of railway; we shall probably want thirty millions more within the next ten years; "we are actually," to use his own exulting terms, "endeavouring to do something, more or less, on fifteen different lines of new railways." Now, my dear John, this may be a comforting reflection for Sir Richard Temple, but I

ask you in the name of common sense whether it is a comfortable reflection for the English to find that they are being led into laying out hundreds of millions on such works, or for the natives of India that they have to pay the enormous loss that is represented by the difference between the guaranteed interest and the railway earnings. I ask you, in the name of that political economy your Indian agents are so fond of, whether it would not be wise to suspend the execution of these magnificent schemes until we see our way more clearly, or at least until the railways already made pay their way, and cease to be a burden on the resources of your poverty-stricken Indian Empire.

And now, my dear John, allow me to remark on the extreme ingenuity by which the burdens of these works have been shifted from the English shareholders on to the backs of the unfortunate natives. Talk of Asiatic art! Why this is really a masterpiece. To get more than the normal rate of money the English can get here—to force the unfortunate natives to take works that don't pay, and then to make them pay for losses that are entirely owing to our own culpable carelessness, in permitting such works either to be made at all, or to be made in such an expensive fashion—to have effected all this is certainly bad enough, but to persevere in the face of the disastrous results already arrived

at, seems to be an act of folly (a much stronger word might fairly be used) which it is impossible to censure too severely. And here allow me to remind you of what I have said in a former paper, namely, that no class of the human animal as yet discovered is fit to be entrusted with the outlay of large sums of money, where the money is not watched and controlled by the representatives of the people; that the only check you can have on the waste of public money in India,* is by limiting the stock of money to be wasted, and that therefore you should borrow no money at all for the future, unless, perhaps, for well-considered irrigation schemes. But, my dear John, where the affairs of a nation are entrusted to a miscellaneous assemblage of irresponsible officials, you are sure to have all the results of the worst kind of despotism; and such a financial despotism at least the natives never before had. In the ordinary course of affairs there are many checks on a despot—the check of his own interests mainly which causes him to consult the wishes of the people as much as possible—and when the worst comes to the worst,

* We have sufficiently shown the numerous ways in which money has been wasted, but we hardly expect to be believed when we say that, on at least one railway, the line has been carried across the country apparently with the sole intention of avoiding every town of importance.

they can generally manage to cut off his head in order to encourage his successors; but you can no more get rid of the never-ending succession of money-squandering despotical officials, than you could get rid of the establishment of Messrs. Spiers and Pond, by cutting off the heads of all the Spiers and Ponds at present in existence. "Now, my good fellow," you broke in, "don't you be in quite such a hurry with your insinuations. I've been thinking over what Colonel Chesney said, and it really does seem quite plain as he says that the twenty-four millions raised from the people to help to defray the cost of these useful railway works, would merely have been spent on some other work." But, my dear John, did it never occur to you that the money need never have been raised, and that the sum represents a great deal of that over-taxation which has made your rule so unpopular, and that it might, if raised at all, have been laid out in the irrigation works which are so urgently needed in India? If your agents set to work to defend the indefensible, why, in the name of Heaven, they don't send for Serjeant Ballantyne instead of attempting to do it out of their own heads, I cannot understand. Every defence one reads seems worse than the last. We find Sir Richard Temple stoutly declaring in the face of evidence that would have satisfied all the judges of

England that there was no oppression under the income-tax because few people complained; Mr. John Strachey, saying that till the establishment of the local cesses the land-holding natives had never paid taxes before, seeing all the money raised was in reality rent, and Mr. Grant Duff declaring in his place in Parliament that there had been no kind of physical disaster during a period when there had been a tremendous famine. Then if you point to the fact that the native stake in our funds is steadily diminishing, they tell you that this is so because the natives are not likely to invest money at 5 per cent. when they can get 10 per cent. amongst themselves; and if you ask on what principle of political economy you take twenty-four millions of money which might have yielded 10 per cent. and lay it out in works that don't yield 3, you will have Colonel Chesney telling you, I suppose, that it really does not matter, as the money would only been spent on some other works.

We have now looked at railways from an economic point of view, and we see that they certainly are a failure. Nor do they answer, from any point of view that I can see. They ought, by the account of the railway men, to avert famines, but they don't; they ought to carry goods cheaply, and in large quantities, to be of any practical use, but they do neither the one nor

the other; they ought to enable us to work our army more cheaply, and they certainly have not done that. Then their weakness, from a military point of view, becomes more apparent the more you consider the subject. Railways are only valuable as long as they are in the entire occupation of the force wishing to use them. Bridges may be blown up; point may be isolated from point, and we may any day be called upon to move troops by road, long after the organization necessary for such work has been broken up. Then they favour the meeting of conspirators, and you can now get down an assassin from the Shere Ali country as easily as you can procure a landlord-shooter in Ireland. But all these, and many kindred considerations, are mere tarts and cheese-cakes when we come to ask ourselves where the money comes from to make these railways, and how it is to be got back. Adding up the total liabilities of the Indian Government, we get to a sum of more than two hundred and thirteen millions, of which less than fourteen millions are held by natives. Well, the Government is going ahead with the railways and threatens to spend another hundred millions in about twenty-seven years more; and the burdens of the Indian tax-payers will, of course, increase with the railway expenditure; at least, Sir Richard Temple thinks

so, and there seems to be no means of knowing that they will not. Now let us look forward twenty-seven years, and imagine us with India tight round our necks, and with liabilities to the English people of about three hundred millions. Frankly, my dear John, I may say that I don't care about the security. What does it depend on? Just let the Chinese know that you don't mean to cut their throats if they don't take Indian opium, and I think your Indian empire, which has hitherto gone up like a rocket, would certainly come down like the stick. Why the concern would be at an end; and as the Chinese have taken to growing the drug themselves, and seem already, by the last account, to have produced as good a quality as the best Indian opium, you may consider that it is merely a question of time as to when your revenue from that source will terminate. At this point of the discussion you began to show signs of great impatience, so quitting the subject of your agents' rotten railway schemes, I turned your attention to Grant Duff, and his conduct on the Finance Committee.

And here, my dear John, I need hardly say that I didn't like saying anything against your favourite agent, but the fact is that Duff, in consequence of there being no one to look after him, has got quite above himself. The truth is, my dear John, that

we all require looking after a bit, and I think I can show you that Duff forms no exception to the rule, and has acted in a way that he never dared have done had he not known how little any Indian matter is noticed by the English press. Well, to make a long story short, I may simply say that a certain Mr. James Geddes, one of the agents on your Indian estates, had written a pamphlet,* which showed the extremely piscatorial condition of the finance of your Indian empire. Now Mr. Geddes came before the Finance Committee, and that the members thought him well worth examining is evidenced by the fact that he was examined at very great length. Here was a chance for Duff; he thought he would do a very clever thing, and as Mr. Geddes had introduced into his financial pamphlet some views of rather a novel description, and had besides made use of some rather out-of-the-way illustrations, this gave a good opportunity for putting questions in such a way as was calculated to cast ridicule on Mr. Geddes, and depreciate the value of the important points he had brought out. But this was far from being all. It was intimated pretty plainly to Mr. Geddes that his opinions ought to be in harmony with the Government he served; and here Mr. Geddes said

* *The Logic of Indian Deficit.* By James Geddes. Part I. Williams and Norgate.

that he certainly ought to be in harmony with the Government, if there was any spirit of harmony in it. Mr. Geddes was clearly not to be put down, and Duff thought he would try something more severe. "You hold an appointment in the Government, do you not?" "Yes," said Mr. Geddes. "And do you expect to return to that post?" asked Duff. Now, my dear John, you will not find that question in the report, for the simple reason that it was ordered to be expunged. So here, my dear John, in a committee appointed with the express purpose of doing justice to the natives of India, you have the eminently English spectacle of an important Indian official—a man who no doubt looks forward to being Secretary of State for India some day—actually browbeating a witness who was bringing out unpalatable facts. But the truth is that your Indian affairs can't bear the light of day, and I dare say Duff thought he was doing a very sharp thing in treating a hostile witness as a personal enemy, and trying to break down the value of his evidence. But just look at the political result. The evidence, of course, went out to India; and it was at once noticed in the Indian papers that this witness, with his awkward facts, had been publicly snubbed by the Under Secretary of State, and this of course just added another stone to that huge cairn of discontent, and to that general sense of

injustice which the people of India are feeling more keenly every day. And then people wonder at the difficulty of getting at independent evidence, and the opinions of the natives of India! The fact is, my dear John, that Duff had no business on the committee at all, and ought immediately to be removed from it; and considering the harm he has done, and that the Indian Government has even taken to punishing severely officers who may possibly have somewhat exceeded their duty in the midst of an exciting outbreak (I allude to Messrs. Cowan and Forsyth), it certainly seems that some inquiry ought to be made into the conduct of an official, and a member of Parliament, who has ventured to act in a manner which is calculated to injure in the eyes of the natives our character for fair play, and to defeat the very end for which the committee was originally appointed. "Well, well," you broke in, "let me hear no more of it. I'll speak to the Duke, and see what he has got to say about Duff's conduct; and at least take care that he is kept in better order for the future."

After this long talk a considerable silence ensued on both sides. You sat and ruminated, while I sat and regarded you with respectful attention. After a long pause, you at length said that you would be glad to have some definite plans for the future. "The fact is," you continued, "that what

with the time that has elapsed between our conversations, and my attention having been so much occupied with our American difficulties, my brain is, as regards Indian affairs, in a general sort of jumble. Your education schemes, your irrigation suggestions, your plans for doing away with what you call departmentalism, and your granaries for preserving the lives of Indian taxpayers, seem certainly worthy of attention; but then there seems to be no money, and by your account the concern is almost bankrupt already. What I want to know is how my Indian estates are to be made to pay their way without grinding and worrying the people." To this very reasonable question I replied that my investigations had not gone far enough as yet to enable me to go into all the details of the administrative reforms that are really necessary; I, however, added that I would just run over the outline of the plans which must be adopted if you want things to go on fairly well.

And now, my dear John, the first thing you have to lay down is that your opium revenue, or at least three-fourths of it, should be treated as a fund for the reduction of debt, and that you must work your concerns on that base if you want to attain a sound financial condition. If you lay down that as a base, you will see at once that no mere clipping and paring will be of much service. Your Finance

Committee, I grant, may stop up a few gutters here and there, but that will not prevent the rain from falling. You must get to big sums at once, and the only way to do this is—

1. To break up the country into at least five great divisions—say Bombay, Madras, Bengal, North-west Provinces, and the Punjaub.

2. The duties of the Governor-General in future to be confined to having the control of all the political relations of the Empire, either in dealing with States inside or exterior of India, and to being minister of war.

3. To centralise the command of the army under one commander-in-chief, who is to be directly under the order of the Viceroy; to substitute generals on three thousand a year for the present military command-in-chief in each presidency, and to do away with the military secretaries of the various governors.

4. The expenses of the army to be apportioned as may seem equitable between the five great States.

5. The permanent force of each regiment of native infantry to be reduced to the lowest possible limits, and the men not required for active duty to be sent to their homes, on a trifling monthly pay, and to be called out once a year.

6. Each governor to manage his own finance,

keep within the present income of his country, and pay year by year his contribution to the national army.

7. Each governor to have a council composed as the presidency councils now are.

8. Appeals to be made direct to the Secretary of State for India on any matter of general importance, as, for instance, in the case of a governor acting in opposition to the constitution of the State.

9. No new laws to be made for the future unless initiated by petition from the people.

10. Every county to have a consultative council, to meet once a month, or as often as may be needed.

11. These councils to act as a channel of communication between the Government and the people, and to be consulted by the collectors regarding all matters of internal administration.

12. The governing power in each collectorate in all points of internal administration to rest with the collector, who is to be assisted by the advice of the councils, and to endeavour to act in accordance with the wishes of the people. Public works, education, and forests, in short everything, to be under his direct control.

13. The income-tax to be abolished, and no fresh taxation to be levied without the consent of the

local councils, and then only for local purposes, unless in the case of a levy required for some extraordinary Imperial emergency, as for instance war.

14. Railway works not to be continued by Government until those already made pay their way.

15. Half of the building expenses of the India Office in England to be returned to the Indian exchequer in India.

16. The Indian Council, and all superfluous officials, to be paid off.

17. All stores for the army, and everything that the Government or Governments in India may require, to be purchased directly by the Indian authorities, without any intervention of India Office officials in this country.

18. The Engineering College at Cooper's Hill to be abolished. Officers to be allowed to volunteer from Royal Engineers on condition of serving twenty years in India; and an engineering college for all classes of British subjects to be established in India.

19. At least one half of the English army in India to be a local force, as this would save enormously both in the expense of supplying men, and do away with many depôts of regiments in this country.

20. The number of English officials to be largely reduced, and their places supplied with natives.

21. A British guarantee to be given for all the liabilities of the Indian Government, with the view of reducing the interest of the debt, and no fresh liabilities to be incurred unless in case of war or some extraordinary emergency, or, perhaps, for some very well-considered irrigation scheme.

22. Each Governor to be directly responsible for the safety of the lives of the inhabitants of his territories, and to take full precautions to prevent deaths* from famines, either by forming State granaries, or in whatever way can be proved to be practicable.

23. The accounts between India and England to be carefully examined, and all sums unjustly extorted from the natives of India to be refunded.†

24. The abolition of the existing Revenue Boards, and the substitution of secretaries to act between the collectors and the Government.

Such, my dear John, is a very rough outline of a

* It has been previously pointed out (see *ante*, pp. 78 to 80) that consultative councils would be of great use, as regards urging the people to store more grain than they do at present, and also in keeping the Government informed as to what grain there was in the possession of the natives. But many years must elapse before these councils can come into practical operation, and the Government must, in the meantime, take measures to insure the lives of its taxpayers.

† The extortions alluded to descend to the lowest depths of meanness, and when we find that the very expenses of the Duke of Edinburgh's aides-de-camp from England to India were charged to the latter country, one is irresistibly reminded of Napoleon's famous sarcasm.

scheme of Government by which the country might be managed cheaply and effectively, and by which it may advance steadily towards representative constitution, and eventually to self-government. In fact the construction is such that you would hammer out at length five compact countries, so that when the day of separation came you would leave behind you, not an unmanageable and disjointed assemblage of nationalities, but five distinct countries well able to look after themselves individually. And not only would you do this, but you would be able to pay off debt, and so lessen the English money-stake in India that the loss of the entire empire would hardly be felt here in a monetary point of view. I need hardly add that the main outline of this scheme is nothing new, and had the sanction of Mr. Bright many years ago. He saw perfectly well that the idea of uniting into one nation peoples so various, and with so many different languages and interests, is as impracticable as it would be to unite all Europe, less Russia, into one nationality, with the seat of Government partly at Paris and partly at Pekin; and in fact, my dear John, that is an exact parallel of what we have been attempting to do in the case of India, the seat of Government being partly at Calcutta and partly in London.

And now, my dear John, I must bid you good-

bye, and go home and commence to work out the details of the new system of Indian administration —an administration, I flatter myself, that will at least pay, which is more than the present one does. And when I have got the whole thing into shape I hope you will be kind enough to grant me another interview, though I am afraid I shall not have things fully ready for many months to come. Here I made a profound and respectful salaam and withdrew, leaving you in a study of the profoundest shade of brown. But just as I was closing the door I heard a long and deep sigh, while with a tone of disgust I heard you say, "Confound this Indian Empire; I wish I was well quit of it, and could get out of the country with my two hundred millions safe in my breeches pockets."

* * * * * * * *

As I was wending my way home, ruminating as I went on the magnitude of the task I had undertaken, half shrinking from the idea of the labour it involved, and yet upheld by the hopes of helping to provide a satisfactory government for the people amongst whom I had lived on pleasant and neighbourly terms for the best years of my life—as I was ruminating on all these and many other points —a messenger came running after me to tell me that you had a few words more to say. I accordingly hastened back, and on re-entering the

chamber I had left you in, you reminded me that I had forgotten all about the way of getting the work of the Finance Committee brought to a satisfactory conclusion. Having duly apologized for the omission, I then proceeded to say that if your agents will only consent to setting up such a constitution as I have suggested, you might disband the committee to-morrow morning. If, however, people will persist in believing that there are some hidden resources to be discovered somewhere in India, and that any methods could be devised for accelerating the national progress at such a rate that we may look forward to our existing expenditure being met by the natural increase of the revenues—if people will persist in entertaining such notions, why, in the name of heaven, let every possible evidence be collected as soon as possible. But to do that you must send on behalf of the committee some confidential agents to India to collect information from the prime ministers of native States and from native chiefs, who are often men of intelligence and education, and who will tell you everything that can be learnt about the means and prospects of the country; and these men are just as anxious to increase their revenues as your people are to increase theirs, and if you sent to them men whom they could trust to explain personally to them the object of the enquiry, I feel

sure they would speak their minds freely, and give the most valuable information procurable. The Commissioners might also pick up in a quiet and informal way information they could get from Englishmen resident in India. But, as I told the committee (and this is the opinion of men of the greatest Indian experience), if you sent a formal Commission to sit and take evidence in some public place, you would simply ascertain nothing at all of the really valuable opinions in India.

One word more, my dear John, and I have done. I have painted you a gloomy picture enough, and unless the Government be reformed the evils I have anticipated will certainly ensue; but reform the administration, and you may lead the people with a single thread of silk. The Hindoos are the most reasonable and easily governable people in the world, and if you will only treat them fairly and frankly, you may govern them safely for an indefinite period. As for the Mahommedans, they do not like us; but, as a Musalman, speaking of his people, said to me only the other day, "We are in the minority, it is true, but we are a powerful minority, and if the English withdrew there would be blows and bloodshed again, and we must therefore have some outside power to govern India, and what that power is we don't particularly care." So you see that the Hindoos will keep quiet if you

let them alone, because they are a very governable people, and all the respectable classes of the Mahommedans (excepting, perhaps, as I have said before, under very powerful temptations), will keep quiet because, if they got rid of us, they don't exactly see their way to being able to assert their ancient supremacy. But the Hindoos and Mahommedans alike feel that they have a right to be consulted, and to have some share in the administration of affairs, and a larger share of Government employment; and if you want to hold India as alone you can safely and honestly hold it, by the free consent of the people, you must make up your mind to reform your Government in some such way as I have indicated, and show the people, in short, that you are leading them on towards that self-government which we ourselves enjoy, and which alone can insure the lasting happiness and welfare of the peoples of India.

THE END.

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